Talking about family photographs and the Australian Baby Boomers' Legacy

Opening the shoeboxes: snapshots, memories and narratives

by

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To the complaint, There are no people in these photographs, *I respond, there are always two people: the photographer and the viewer.*

Ansel Adams (1902-1984)

ABSTRACT

The Baby Boomer is the first generation to have relatively uncomplicated access to mass-produced cameras, inexpensive processing of images and an extensive personal collection of photographs. In major segments of the western world, academic interest in post World War II family collections of photographs is steadily increasing. However, there are few Australian authored papers, narratives, or noteworthy texts that consider the cultural value and influence, or the growing social and historic value of these family photographic collections. This thesis explores the way in which Australian Baby Boomers construct the narratives from their lives using their family photographic collection. Furthermore it examines how these photographs influence family histories by examining the opportunity that is presented to Baby Boomers to curate their legacy. Accordingly this thesis is situated at the intersection of oral history and auto/ethnography.

In the past, photographs have primarily been used by researchers to view and assist in the cultural and social interpretation of an individual or a group. That is, outsiders as the authority, determining what will be viewed and interpreted for the group being researched. The approach in this research reverses that method and allows the individual or cluster, the Baby Boomers, to tell their story and leave their legacy, using their family photographs in the process. Hence this thesis is based on the photograph, using it as the primary stimulus for the narratives, family myths and oral history to strengthen the family legacy.

Specifically the research illustrates in what manner Australian Baby Boomers can use family photographs as a conduit to oral history, augmenting life-writing, story-telling and memory-making. The thesis demonstrates and argues how important photographs are in telling a story and the special relationship that Baby Boomers have with their family photo-collections. These narratives are an important social and cultural history. Although family photographs and allied stories sit

outside of the traditional and official historian's view of the world, this does not make the analysis of the family histories any less legitimate – just different. However, they remain a significant resource for current researchers and for social disclosure in the future. During my interviews with more than forty Baby Boomers about their family photographic collections, I observed that I was continually being drawn into their oral history. As they showed me their photographs, spoke of their recollections and the bitter-sweetness of their personal nostalgia I often became aware that I was reflecting on my life and the considerable role photography plays in it.

For me it became obvious that I could not separate myself from the research. Consequently the enquiry progressed into a concurrent and contributing study – an autoethnographic account of my narrative using my collection of family photographs. I treat the initial ethnographic study as the structural warp in this array of scholarly discussion and participants' narratives. The weft that adds further threads to this thesis I have defined as photographic autoethnography. It is the manner in which I tell my story or provide my legacy and a method others may wish to emulate.

DECLARATION

I declare that:

this thesis presents work carried out by myself and does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university;

to the best of my knowledge it does not contain any materials previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; and all substantive contributions by others to the work presented, including jointly authored publications, is clearly acknowledged.

This thesis is edited by Dr Sue Anderson according to the guidelines of the Australian Institute of Professional Editors (IPEd).

David Alan Sweet

Date

Arguably this thesis had its genesis when I was still wearing short pants and could write no more than my own name. To all of those people, who influenced my life and history you have been valued beyond your understanding.

In 1995 I met Gordon Dawson, in Perth, Western Australia, and during the following nine years we worked together on a number of projects. He is, to me, one of Australia's creative advertising masters. I stole from Gordon his practice of constantly using a notebook to jot down: '[his] dumb and not so dumb ideas'. Thus the concepts and analysis that are argued in this study are influenced by my 'dumb and not so dumb ideas'. Also I am indebted to many other friends and colleagues, who over the years provided me with life's lessons.

While the process of writing a dissertation can be a lonely affair, I could not have done it without the support and patience of my family, especially my wife Pam. While friends have often scratched their heads in wonderment of the challenges of a thesis, they have helped in numerous ways to keep me focused, and provided some brutally honest comments that kept me grounded in reality. I have a sincere appreciation for those friends and strangers who invited me into their homes, opened up their photo albums and told their stories to provide the rich and often intimate narratives of their lives.

In the early stage of this personal challenge I met some fellow candidates, who like me were facing the daunting task of researching and writing their own thesis. We banded together to share our drafts, discuss, argue, debate and help each other. We have become friends. To the members of our 'Friday' group: Dr Gretta Koch, Dr Dianne De Bellis, Corinna Di Niro, Pablo Mustera, Michael Noble, John Pike, Judith Timoney, Phillip van Hout and Amelia Walker, you have my gratitude for your guidance, wise words, advice and encouragement over the years.

Colleagues and professional staff at the University of South Australia, specifically the Magill campus, Julie White, Martina Nist and David Brittan – amongst many others – provided unquestioned encouragement and help, both in my research and the teaching I undertook. Dr Leanne Glenny and Dr Vicky Crowley freely offered inspiration and guidance beyond their responsibilities for which I am sincerely grateful. Professor Kerry Green and Professor Claire Woods set me on the path of academic rigour and encouraged me to read widely. I thank you for that guidance.

With changes to the University staffing I have had the benefit of wise counsel from a number of supervisors. To Dr Chris Hogarth, who in the final weeks of this thesis took on the responsibility of principal supervisor, your comments and help have been sincerely appreciated. From the outset, Dr Jean Duruz has been a wise and experienced mentor. As my Associate Supervisor, Jean pushed and prodded my writing, challenged me to read more widely and helped strengthen my arguments. I looked forward to Jean's wise words and email comments on my work.

My sincere and heart-felt gratitude is to Adjunct Associate Professor Peter Bishop. Over a cup of coffee, so long ago, he volunteered to supervise me. Through all my challenges, personal and academic, Peter has shown patience, understanding and support. His breadth of knowledge in the field is astounding and in comparison I know I have but scratched the surface with my research. His quiet suggestions, recommendation of another text, or the thread of an argument has taken me to knowledge that I would have been bereft without his direction. I will miss our regular talks – thank you Peter.

To my 'mate' Dr Nigel Starck, who has been a colleague, friend and mentor for more than three decades, your passion for the English language knows no bounds and continues to inform me. However, it was your belief in my ability to complete this thesis, even in the most challenging times, and refusing to allow me the option of giving up that shows your true friendship – thank you.

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Glossary of terms

ABC	The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) is the government-funded media entity established by an Act of Parliament to provide media (radio, television and new media services) access across Australia, no matter where people reside.
ABS	The Australian Bureau of Statistics.
Anzac/ANZAC	The Australian, New Zealand Army Corps (World War I) and the commemorative day (April 25) of recognition of all personnel who served in theatres of war.
Baby Boomer	A person born between 1946 and 1965.
Caravan	A mobile home, towed behind a car or similar vehicle.
MFS	The South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service.
RPNGC	The Royal Papuan and New Guinea Constabulary.
SLR	The single lens reflex camera – the photographer views the scene through the lens, avoiding errors of parallax.
WAGS	The Western Australian Geological Society.

Style guide

'Baby Boomer' or 'Boomer': are used with capital letters to mark them as a point of difference.

Copyright: where the copyright is unknown, all reasonable attempts have been made to identify or locate this information. If you are the author, or know who they are, please contact copyright@unisa.com.au (This link is correct as of December 2015)

Dates: are expressed as: October 21, 1999.

em dash: in this thesis I have added a space before and after the em dash – as shown here.

Footnotes: are presented in italics and used to add further information, provide an explanation where the material is interesting, but not critical to the thesis or argument.

Headpiece: at the beginning of each chapter a 'headpiece' has been used to introduce the general theme of the chapter. The information either comes from the research participants, or my own research. In most cases this headpiece is referred to in the body of the chapter, making its relevance understood.

Hyperlinks: are active as of November 2015.

Numbers: are spelt out in full unless it is a direct quote from another source, or a year, e.g. 1947.

Photographs: all photographs reproduced in this thesis are either referenced, owned by the author, or have been used with permission. Under Australian copyright law, photographs taken prior to January 1, 1955 are out of copyright.

Referencing: in this thesis the referencing is the (*Harvard-UniSA*) author date style: https://lo.unisa.edu.au/pluginfile.php/438774/mod_book/chapter/39173/HRG January 2015 final version.pdf (This link is correct as of December 2015)

Research participants: in this thesis I have differentiated between those participants in the research who have opted for anonymity and those who have given permission for their identity to be made public. For those wishing to remain anonymous I have used a single first name pseudonym (eg Ruth), and the person's full name, (eg John Adey), when permission was granted, or if they are a known public figure – see the appendix.

Spelling: unless it is a direct quote from another text, or the quirkiness of geographical place names, the spelling in this thesis is based on the *Macquarie Australia's national dictionary*, 2009 (5th ed).

Style guidance: with other matters of style and referencing, *the Australian Government Style manua*l (6th ed) is used.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my nineteen-year-old nephew, Carl Salomon (1995-2015). In a Year 12 history paper he wrote[1] *on the relationship between the Hollywood film genre and the Holocaust: 'that the study of historical fragments are imperative in preventing memory from being lost'.*

---

1 This information has been provided with the kind permission of Marco Scali, MA (History) former teacher of history at Newington College, Sydney and was part of his eulogy to Carl at his funeral service on February 16, 2015.

PROLOGUE: GRANDPA, TELL ME ABOUT THE OLDEN DAYS?

> *We travelled to Sydney, there were eight of us, six adults and two children; Marie [the author's sister] was only four years old then. The other family, the 'Lamberts', had built two caravans and we drove across the Hay Plains. We wanted to see the new bridge. It was early 1933 and the Bridge [Sydney Harbour Bridge] had only been opened a few months. There were no caravan parks or anything then. We just camped on the side of the road. Every town we went through, people came out and crowded around. They'd never seen a house on wheels before. When we got to Sydney we parked in a friend's backyard, that was all there was, no parks to camp in. Driving down Liverpool Road all the news people were out there to see us. They [news photographers and journalists] made a great how-do-you-do about it – well, caravans were very new and we were the first from interstate to make the journey and cross the bridge. I had all those photographs – I don't know where they are now.*
>
> *This is an extract from an interview I conducted with my mother, Pearl Sweet, aged 90, in January 1994.*

With the Baby Boomer generational growth after World War II, academic interest in the family collections of photographs is gradually emerging, specifically in the United States, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom (Halle 1987; Langford 2001; McGill, D 1989, p. 645; Spence, J & Holland 1991). Yet there are few comprehensive papers, narratives, or significant texts that consider the cultural significance and the growing social and historic value of the family photographic collections of the Australian Baby Boomer[2] generation. Family photographs are more than just a tool for family historians to use; they play a noteworthy role in forming that history through orality, story-telling and memory-making. This becomes the alchemy of converting a photograph into a narrative. Conversely the absence of photographs leaves a hiatus in the elaboration of these histories. This thesis addresses this gap. It explores the way in which Baby Boomers construct the narratives from their lives using their family photographic collection. Furthermore it examines how these

2 *The Baby Boomer, those born between 1946 and 1965, is defined and discussed in some detail under 'Who is this Boomer?' later in this chapter.*

photographs influence family histories by examining the opportunity that is presented to Baby Boomers to curate their legacy.

In this thesis I frame the research using the Baby Boomer generation and define this setting: ‘as a cohort of individuals who are born at a given time’ (Edmunds & Turner 2002, p. 6). The understanding and defining of a generation is a complex relationship impacted by numerous variables. This question was raised with varying theories considered by Mannheim (1952, pp. 304-312). The Baby Boomer is the first generation to have relatively uncomplicated access to mass-produced cameras, inexpensive processing of images and an extensive personal collection of photographs.

In the past, photographs have primarily been used by researchers to view and assist in the cultural and social interpretation of an individual or a group. Tagg (1988), in his series of essays, uses the photograph to discuss its currency, the interpretation of the image(s) and what they represent. Similarly Harper (2002) outlines the method of inserting photographs into the interview. That is, outsiders as the authority, determining what will be viewed and interpreted within the group being researched. This thesis reverses that method and allows the individual or cluster, the Baby Boomer, to tell their story using their family photographs in the process. Hence the narrative is based on the photograph, which is the primary prompt for the oral, social and cultural history. I am a Baby Boomer and part of that community; consequently, my research is from within the demographic group.

Specifically the research illustrates in what manner Australian Baby Boomers can use family photographs as a conduit to oral history, augmenting life-writing, story-telling and memory-making. The research demonstrates the importance that photographs deliver in reinforcing, or prompting oral history and the special relationship that Baby Boomers have with their family photo-collections. I argue that these family photographs can offer an understanding and interpretation of the nostalgic, social and cultural aspects of family life in Australia since 1946.

Our ability to accurately document these family photographs, combined with the related oral history is time-specific and if not recorded it weakens a tradition of generational transference of myths, values and the associated narratives. Without this history family members, and others, may experience a sense of individual loss and a breakdown with a connection to their past (Sacks 2009, p. 5).

As one of those Baby Boomers, now a grandfather, this caused me to reflect on the research for this thesis when Jessica, my eldest grandchild, phoned me and without any preamble asked: 'Grandpa, tell me about the olden days? I have to do a school project.'

The research milieu

The plaintive phone call from Jessica gave me reason to think about how I remember my past and what may happen to those memories. I have owned and used cameras since 1957. Consequently I understand my life, my past, and my heritage, by means of the photographs I have inherited, taken, and collected. Apparently Jessica's school friends were approaching their older family members with similar questions[3]. This led me to question in what ways do other grandparents and Baby Boomers think and talk about their family photographs and what role do these images have in how we remember the past?

The collection of photographs depicting aspects of family life has evolved over the history of the camera and its image capturing processes. In many families this acquisition, storing and ritualised viewing of the images is a reflection of their history. Writer and photographer Jo Spence (1991, p. 203), contemplates what the family album contains and suggests that our continued return to these collections is to discover some hidden memory. However, there is a more pressing issue than discovering hidden memories. While memory-work and its links to domestic photography is a fundamental component of this thesis, I am also

3 *See Perks and Thomson (2006 pp. 447-448), specifically regarding oral history and schools.*

contemplating the longer-term worth – what will happen to these compilations of images and stories over time? Having a collection of photographs does not automatically give it value, as not every family member will consider it worthwhile (Gibson 2008, p. 101).

In my family, the last of my parents' generation died in 1998. Now their surviving child and grandchildren are those responsible for preserving the family memories and history. I am the last-born, hence the youngest of this generation in my extended family and one of only three Baby Boomers. The other two are older cousins of mine. While there are a number of photographs of these other family members, I know little of their lives and virtually nothing of the circumstances and stories of the photographs. It is as if their lives, their memories and their stories have been wrapped up and packed away. Employing ethnographic and autoethnographic research of the Australian Baby Boomer generation, this study interrogates these Boomers' involvement with family photography and how it chronicles their past. However, the past is not 'fixed'. It is reviewed and interpreted, then reconstructed. The question of legacy and 'family' heritage is a meaningful argument throughout this thesis. At times I feel haunted that my life, through my memories and stories, will be bypassed. This thesis addresses that uncertainty by conveying knowledge and understanding about an important facet of family history, individual experiences and the wider social understanding in Australia.

Who is this Boomer?

In what the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) refers to as *Population Profiles*, the Baby Boomer is defined as a person from the birth cohort (born) between January 1946 and December 1965 (2012a). It was in those post-Second World War years in Australia, New Zealand, the USA, and Canada where, on the return of service personnel and the relaxation of wartime rationing of goods and services, there was a significant and extended growth or boom in the population (Jones 1980, p. 21). One of

the earliest references to the concept of the baby boom appeared in the US publication *Time*, on Monday February 9, 1948 (Thompson, EK). The demographer, Bernard Salt, claims that the term Baby Boomer, employed as a generic or marketing description, did not gain common usage until the *New Yorker* used it in 1979 (2003, p. 10). Conversely, the American author Landon Jones similarly claims to have coined the phrase, 'Baby Boomers' in his 1980 publication, *Great expectations America and the baby boom generation* (pp. 5-7). When the term first appeared in print is not critical in this thesis. It is important to note, however, that during the past three decades the expression has become a popular representation, not only to define a particular demographic, but to establish the basis of the descriptive portrayal, and separation from the subsequent generations of X, Y, and iGen.

In his 1927 essay on generations, Mannheim (1952, p. 292) states that:

> The social phenomenon 'generation' represents nothing more than a particular kind of identity of location, embracing related 'age groups' embedded in historical-social process.

'Branding' any generation with a name does not define it. Yet Baby Boomers 'came from a particular childhood in a particular era' (Townsend 1988, p. 206). However: 'generationalism is partly a form of marketing, a way of ushering in the new' (Davis, M 1997a, p. 255). Present day consumerism and its marketing is often directed to specific generational target audiences, more often than not, determined in the first instance by age (Boone & Kurtz 1986, p. 325; Edmunds & Turner 2002, p. 115).

Accordingly, defining the Baby Boomer as a single demographic is less appealing in the twenty-first century than it has been in the past as: 'one message won't work for all people' (Sivulka 1998, p. 381). This observation by Sivulka is also supported by this thesis. Hence, this thesis is not representative of all Baby Boomers. Those interviewed show variation in their family photographic collections and also postulate a range of thoughts about the memories they prompt, and the purpose for their future legacy. The experiences of the early boomers when

compared to the later born boomers are different. Whether it is the shadow of the 'Cold War', conscription and the Vietnam War for the early Boomers (Mackay 1997, p. 61), or political and social change, environmental awareness, and the beginning of globalisation for the later Boomers, their life encounters have marked divergences (Phillipson 2007, pp. 7-11). Also as critics of generational research have pointed out, factors such as; social class, gender, race, education, employment and religion are significant indicators that also contribute to the continuing discord on generational grouping; see (Confino 1997; Davis, M 1997a; Edmunds & Turner 2002; Jones 1980; Mackay 1998). Thus the concept of 'a generation' is complex and may be determined by varying parameters. With this explication, I argue that we can speak of a generation of Baby Boomers and that it has a unique and focal role in preserving the social and cultural histories of its time.

Nonetheless, the Baby Boomer is the first cohort that has been in a position to easily and comprehensively document their lives using photography. While each Baby Boomer family has their individual history and each person's memory of that history is different, it is the collective of these domestic photographic anthologies that this research encapsulates (Halbwachs 1992 (trans), pp. 54-56). Connected to these family collections of photographs is the bitter-sweet complexity of nostalgia. Nostalgia is a recurring theme in this thesis and its evolution and contemporary understanding is expanded upon in later chapters.

This family?

For this research I made the assumption, correctly or not, that those interviewed were members of a family and that their photographs recorded some of that family's activities. In Roman times 'family' included all members of the household, servants and slaves as well as those connected through marriage or bloodlines (Gillis 1996, p. 22). Labelling the make-up of the family has challenged social researchers for some time. There is, in the wider community, a concept of the nuclear family.

While this is now debunked as a myth, in reality it is still held as a truth (Bittman & Pixley 1997, pp. 13-14). Each household is shaped and understood by whatever is considered their social and cultural norm. However, from my research group I cannot, nor have I attempted to determine a commonality to designate as a family.

The glorification of the family under the custom of family photography as a convention, Marianne Hirsch claims, is one that: 'reinforces the power of the notion of "family"' (1997, p. 47). However, a family is a shifting and somewhat complex group. Even popular culture cannot clearly define the modern family (Stone 2004, p. 396). Certainly in the past century there have been significant shifts in the makeup of the family and the role of the people within the family group. These changes have not only been in the composition of the family unit, but also the roles various members have within that changing unit. The Australian family at the turn of this century is described as: 'the age of single parents and "blended" families' (Davis, M 1997b, p. 16). In a general sense, in many parts of the world from the mid-nineteenth century, the expanding industrialisation of manufacturing and its supporting work-force changed the family earning potential from the collective to that of the individual (Goode 2003).

Similarly, smaller families and a move to individualism was likewise noted by Beaujot (2004). Furthermore, in the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries the early death of a parent was not uncommon due to a shorter life expectancy than experienced in the latter years of the twentieth century. However, in the past sixty years this loss through an early death has been supplanted with divorce, thus distancing a parent from the family.

It is noted by Australian researchers de Vaus and Gray that the birth of children to a single parent increased significantly from the 1950s through to the first few years of the twenty-first century (2004). The past cultural family norm in Australia of two parents and children has changed since the middle of the twentieth century. No matter how a family may be defined: 'they are made not born' (Bittmann & Pixley 1977, p. 20). In this

thesis I have accepted that the notion of family is an ill-defined construction.

Those researched

A comprehensive breakdown of the research participants is set out in Appendix 1. Of the forty-six research participants, their gender is split, with twenty-four females and twenty-two males. There are twenty-eight early Boomers (those born before 1956), thirteen are late Boomers, four are born before 1946 and one born after 1965. There are thirty-three who are married, two in de facto relationships, four are divorced, two widowed and two are single – never married. In addition, there are two same-sex relationships, four single parents, ten have mixed cultural backgrounds, or have children or grandchildren with a mixed heritage, in the research pool. Two interviewees were adopted as children and three couples adopted or fostered children. Of the Baby Boomers interviewed their ages range from early fifties through to the mid-sixties. The three people interviewed who are now in a second marriage, or have a new partner, have teenage, or young adult children still living with them. Eight interviewees were not born in Australia, but whether their origins were from Europe (one), the United Kingdom (four), United States (one), Asia (one) or the Pacific region (one), they had all spent a significant portion of their life, from the nineteen-fifties, living in Australia. Consequently I claim that individual family histories are pointedly important, as they are diverse.

The family and photography

In a short period of time, which can be aligned with the advent of photography, but not caused by it, the structures of the family and the roles within it have changed markedly. No matter the changes in defining 'the family', personal and family photography play a vital role in the cognisance of memory.

Kuhn (2007, p. 286) describes it as:

> Work on personal and domestic photography and memory can unlock doors to understanding not only the ethnography of everyday memory talk, but also the workings of cultural memory across wider social-historical spheres.

Consequently various viewings and interpretations of family photographs can prompt further investigation and discovery. This more comprehensive analysis provides the evidence to lead the viewer to an understanding of the time, place or event (Kuhn 2007, p. 283). However, the concept of photographic evidence, or truth, is subjective and 'pictures represent a small and highly selected sample of the real world about which they are supposed to be conveying some truth' (Becker, HS 1986, p. 273). Aspects of truth and the photograph are discussed in Chapter Two.

Whether for a domestic pastime, a social outing, travel, or numerous other reasons, photography has become a cultural activity, and a growing phenomenon. In the first half of the twentieth century, the two world wars and the Great Depression meant that many families struggled for the basic necessities to survive. Domestic photography was a luxury that few could afford, and it was primarily the slowly emerging middle-class that participated in the growth of amateur photography. Yet during this period Kodak, which was at that time the most significant player in expanding domestic photography, was able to grow its sales through astute promotions and marketing (Taylor, J 1994). The early marketing drive for domestic photography came out of the United States. As an indication, and for the US market alone, in 1962, the number of domestic or amateur photographs is estimated at 2.2 billion. During the next seven years this number more than doubled to 4.5 billion snapshots and by 1975 this had grown to more than seven billion (Merry 1984, p. 16). Arguably this is a 'best estimate', however trends can be gauged in the growth of domestic photography in developed countries, and it coincided with the economic and baby booms of the 1950s through to the mid 1960s.

With the converging technologies of mobile phones and cameras, and digital cameras often having video capabilities, the number of images captured in the current era can only be estimated. A recent (2013-2014) advertising campaign by Apple™, promoting the *iPhone 5™,* claims that more photographs are taken with the iPhone in one day than with any other camera. There are numerous means of uploading and displaying photographs via the Internet; Facebook™, Instagram™ and Tumblr™ are some examples. Using Instagram as an illustration of the vast number of images being recorded, the exponential growth in amateur photography can be seen. Launched on October 6, 2010, Instagram™ quickly became popular with Internet users for the posting of photographs, comments and the sharing of images. Within nine weeks it had attracted more than one-million users. As of May 2015, seventy-million photographs (on average) are posted each day, and that is more than two and a half billion images a year. Seventy per cent of this activity is outside of the United States (Systrom 2015). While this digital medium is only one of numerous similar sites, it is a clear example of how the breadth of domestic photography has exploded in the past decade. Furthermore, this does not take into account all the other digital images that are held in cameras, computers and other storage devices. Nonetheless, those interviewed for this thesis continue to be drawn to their older, printed family photographs of themselves and other family members. However, they also acknowledge that the taking and recording of images by individuals has changed radically since the evolution of the digital camera. Irrespective of the veracity of this claim by Apple™, modern photography is markedly different and faster than its film-based predecessor.

I argue that since the Second World War, family photography in Australia has been overlooked as a matter of scholarly research. Family photography and the oral histories, narratives and personal stories that originate from these Australian collections are an important social and cultural history. Freund and Thomson (2011, pp 2-3) are compelling in their discussion that oral historians' use of photographs has also been

deficient. These family photographs and allied stories sit outside of the traditional and official historian's view of the world. This does not make the analysis of the family histories any less legitimate – just different. However, they remain vitally important and valuable for current researchers and into the future.

Australian Generations project

In late 2012 I became aware of the Australian Oral History Generations Project[4]. This is a joint, national, project with Monash University, the Australian National Library, the ABC's Social History Unit and supported by Oral History Australia (OHA). For this thesis I am not intending to discuss its genesis, background, or the content of the rich and informative interviews, which are available on the project web site. My interest is in being an interview participant.

My research is sourced either from interviews with a number of participants, or I apply a self-interviewing model of interrogation to develop my own narrative[5]. The national project offered an opportunity for me to be a participant and become an interview subject. I applied to be interviewed as part of the Baby Boomer generation. I suggest that this is quite an unusual situation where the principal in a targeted research thesis becomes a subject in an allied, but different project. While now a participant in a research project, I still consider myself as the participant observer from an ethnographic researcher perspective. The administrative issues around permission, copyright and ethics mirror my own experiences. All of the preparation, advice and instructions are provided electronically either by email or web links. This is somewhat different to my approach where I use posted correspondence, email in some cases, but more often my initial contact is face-to-face or by phone.

The interview was recorded in my home over two days (about three hours in each sitting) in December 2013. The interviewer is a professional

4 *For details on this extensive project visit: http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/australian-generations/*
5 *This methodology is discussed in some detail in Chapter Three, Autoethnography of a Baby Boomer.*

historian with more than thirty years experience. I found it interesting that he had not undertaken any additional research into my background, other than what I had already provided. This is not the place to replicate that interview; however, it can be accessed from the *Australian Generations* website. I noted that the interviewer had a single page of prompts and no detailed or specific questions seemed to be predetermined. He let the conversation flow and picked up on points he found of interest or where he wanted further details or explanations. The interviewer relied completely on my memory and did not seek to use triggers such as photographs, letters or other memorabilia. The relaxed and friendly conversation followed a timeline of early memories through to more current activities. Areas of interest that drew more specific questions included schooling, employment and sport.

In comparing our interviewing styles, they are similar[6]. We both prepare open-ended prompts to start and guide the conversation, and take opportunities to look deeper into some of the more interesting details the interview reveals. My research is quite specific in using Baby Boomer family photographs where the interview for this project is more general in its approach. I find this difference of interest. In applying photographic autoethnography to this thesis I maintain the focus on the stories and memories that are prompted by the images. In this interview, photography was hardly mentioned and I note that another 'oral history' of mine unfolded. Besides the pleasure of being interviewed it was an insightful occasion. I believe that this experience indicates that my broad methodology and method of research is philosophically sound. Whilst the specifics of our research projects are different, the methodology to oral history, ethnographic and autoethnographic examination are shown as valid.

6 *The methodology for this thesis and the supporting research is discussed in detail in Chapter Two, A focus on methodology.*

Arrangement of this thesis

This thesis is presented as six main chapters, bookended, with an introduction (Prologue) and a conclusion. The process in the first five chapters is to proffer an ethnographic treatment appraising some of the key literature, an in-depth consideration of methodologies and methods of research, and an analysis of the fieldwork study. However, during my interviews with Baby Boomers about their family photographic collections, I observed that I was continually being drawn into their narratives. As they showed me their photographs and spoke of their recollections I often became aware that I was reflecting on my life and the considerable role photography plays in it. For me this tension became especially interesting in that I could not separate myself from the study. Similarly, Ellis talks of a comparable struggle she experienced in writing her dissertation where she 'anguished over speaking too often in the first person …' (2009, pp. 65-66). While there may be similarities and touch-points between those interviewed and myself in our respective memories and narratives, the interpretation and understanding are different. Despite the similarities in our life-stories they are not conjoined and Cavarero (2000, p. 92) argues that:

> No matter how much the larger traits of our life-stories are similar, I still do not recognize myself in you and even less, in the collective we … I recognize, on the contrary, that your uniqueness is exposed to my gaze and consists in an unrepeatable story whose tale you desire.

Consequently this research progressed into a second, but concurrent and contributing study in this thesis – an autoethnographic account of my narrative using my collection of family photographs.

Whether it is by interpretation or power, the Baby Boomers are looking to manage their memories through their legacy. Nonetheless, once passed on to the next generation, the Baby Boomer may have some lingering influence through the narrative, but no longer has the power to direct an understanding. How these collections of photographs and stories are interpreted and used as a photo-induced legacy in the future, either by

family members, or social researchers is unknown and cannot be controlled. This post-war generation has also inherited or 'discovered' legacies from their parents and other ancestors as well. Not only has this demographic been the first to accumulate so much personal material, they have often inherited worthy family collections.

However, it is the evolving instruments for this physical and oral legacy that is becoming a challenge to many Baby Boomers. They are confronted with diverse options to 'save' their story. Not every possible means of recording their family and photographic history can be explored in this thesis. Drawing on a number of discussions, Greiff (1999, p. 205) likens life and legacy to a burning torch. He claims the important aspect of passing on the torch to future generations is to do it before it burns down. Thus the 'head piece' to the Prologue is revisited to show the worth and value of these personal family legacies.

The stories from others' lives and my own chronicle create a tapestry using family photography and the experiences of Australian Baby Boomers. I apply the ethnographic study as the structural warp in this array of narratives. The autoethnographic account becomes the weft that adds further threads to this thesis and the manner in which I tell my story. Each chapter is preceded by a short anecdote, or 'headpiece' sourced from the research. Besides providing an interesting opening to the more prescribed arguments, it highlights a quintessential aspect of the discussions that follow. I have not attempted to provide a strict chronological order to these events. I suggest that our memories are not rigid, or locked in to a set time-line, but are fluid and often have the ability to connect unrelated events and people. However, I have followed a general theme for each of the following chapters.

The first chapter, Framing the Literature, reviews relevant scholarly literature. Roland Barthes' principle of the *punctum* photograph is the keystone from which the theoretical framework of this thesis develops (2000 (trans)). However, other interlocking concepts of memory, memory-making, family sourced oral history, and story-telling form the

'onioning', or additional rings, of discussion and argument. This chapter considers some of the seminal works on these matters: Holland (1991), Hirsch, J (1981), Hirsch, M (1997; 1999), Kuhn (1991; 2007; 2010), Longford (2001), Spence and Holland (1991), Spence (1991), Freund, A and Thomson, A (2001), and Ritchie (2011). Marianne Hirsch, for example, reflects on how the family photograph constructs the family relationships and prompts cultural memory. As a contrasting view of the family photograph, Freund and Thomson (2011) contemplate the relationships between the oral story and the visual image to sustain another memory – the legacy of the family. Legacy, or the desire of leaving something tangible for future generations, is a topic raised in the research and is a concluding issue in this thesis. In this discussion I build on the work of Becker, E (1973), Ellis, C (2004, 2009), Johnson et al (2004), and Marcoux (2001). This argument of leaving a legacy is succinctly summarised as: 'we want to be remembered fondly and we want to leave a mark when we go' (Hunter & Rowles 2005, p. 345). The notion that oral history and family photography is connected to legacy is analysed to appreciate its continuing value. Similarly nostalgia is a concept throughout this research. Bishop, P (1995) and Elizabeth Wilson's (1997) understanding that nostalgia is more than sentimentality is the theme with which I identify.

A Focus on Methodology, Chapter Two, employs the Baby Boomers' family photographic collections as the primary means of unearthing the narratives of this demographic group. Using ethnography and participant observation as the critical research methodologies, interviews with forty-five participants between 2010 and 2014 form the nucleus of this research (see Appendix 1). This study is underpinned by the ethnographic and autoethnographic framing of Denzin and Lincoln (2000; 2005), Ellis (2004) and Lindlof and Taylor (2011; 2002). Each sixty to ninety-minute interview is recorded, transcribed and analysed in-depth. To bookend this research, four parents of Boomers are similarly interviewed, as are four people from post-Boomer generations. These interviews show that there are 'personal meanings that family members

attach to their own photographs – the ideas that they interpret as significant' (Chalfen 2006, p. 229). The research confirms that in using family photographs the researcher can delve more deeply into the memories and lives of those being researched.

To introduce a second strand of research, that of my life through the influences of photography, I apply an autoethnographic perspective. Here I discuss the concepts of autoethnography and how this has a positive relationship with the core methodology – qualitative ethnography. This discussion defines how autoethnography is employed to address a personal narrative through the concept of self-interviewing. I again draw on the work of Ellis (2009; 2004) and specifically her research on autoethnography. It is the telling of one's own story that 'becomes a social process for making lived experience understandable and meaningful' (Ellis 2009, p. 197). This social process is further supported using Chang's (2008, pp. 90-91) discussions on self-observation and the earlier investigations into autoethnography by Van Maanen (1995), Reed-Danahay (1997) and Ellis and Bochner (2000). The motivation that photography has had on my life is indisputable and adds to the legacy I wish to leave for future generations. The chapter introduces what I define as 'photographic autoethnography'. Specifically, I separate this model from earlier works on photo-elicitation, photo-feedback and photo-ethnography that are reviewed by Curry (1986), Harper (2002) and Van House (2009).

Genealogy and Memories, Chapter Three, opens the literal and metaphoric shoebox of family photographic collections and the memories these images create. While there is a genealogical background to some photographic collections, I maintain that the strength of these images lies in their ability to induce memory-making. Preserving the past for the future is discussed and debated through the studies by Hall (1990), Holland (1991), Kuhn (1991), Portelli (1997; 2006), and Thomson (2011). The story of Marc and Carol is the cornerstone of this chapter, and it provides an insight to the consequence and importance that a single

photograph can present. For them, the one photograph has not only opened up a hitherto unknown past, but also created a new legacy.

Memory-making or re-remembering is discussed in some depth and I draw on the stories of the research group to explore their experiences of photo-induced recall. Key aspects of these narratives become the ancestral signposts in their lives. Whether these memories are constructed through the telling and re-telling of the narrative, the photograph plays an integral part in the memories formed. This chapter introduces the first discussions by the research participants (the Baby Boomers) and their desire to leave a legacy. Building on the relationship between the photographs and memory, their narratives and the tapestry they weave, I advance the linking of the participants' stories and a 'photographic autoethnographic' treatment in this thesis.

Chapter Four, Nostalgic Threads is predominantly an ethnographic look at various interviewees, their history and how photographs or the absence of them have a direct relationship to their re-remembering. It examines the correlation between stories, photographs and their rejuvenated memories, and Portelli's three aspects of orality (2006). The understanding of and interest in nostalgia continues to be a topic of academic and social discussion. I draw on the works of Davis (1979), Hutcheon (1993), Pickering and Keightley (2006) and Mannik (2011) as a backdrop to how this phenomenon relates to my interview participants and family photography in general. At times these participant narratives are wistful or draw on sadness and grief within their families. The participants speak quietly of less happy times, of estranged families, abandonment and divorce. Yet these are passing moments of reflection and the interviewees fondly reminisce about their early and comforting memories of the 1950s and 1960s. The participants acknowledge that over time they have, or are developing, an oral history of their family and it is a means of leaving a legacy. Photographs, whether many or few, are shown to be the connection between these narratives and the varying memory journeys and nostalgic paths they create. However, as I

discovered in all of these interviews, I was drawn into their stories and found that my own memories were also nudged.

A Proffered Legacy, Chapter Five, addresses what I consider four important aspects of how many Baby Boomers are going about their legacy. Using the cultural specific positioning of Hunter and Rowles (2005) and interrogating the interview data I select a number of examples to show the differences and the similarities in providing a legacy. However, I suggest that legacy is more than leaving some form of history and this is supported by the arguments of: Marcoux (2001), Hunter & Rowles (2005), and McGill (2009). In the context of family photography and oral history, it is a vague desire for immortality as discussed by Becker (1973) and McAdams (1993). Similarly, Baby Boomers have valued their experiences and it is their interpretation of this value they wish to leave to their children and grand children. This is a unique opportunity for Baby Boomers; being the first generation to have the opportunity to leave a significant volume of family photographs for future generations.

In the sixth chapter, Photographic Autoethnography – Oral History, I explore this autoethnographic richness – in the main – through my early collection of family photographs. Autoethnographic writing, while personal, will often be emotional (Anderson and Glass-Coffin, 2013). Drawing on this emotion I 'narrate' (Ellis, C 2009) my stories, which are drawn from the photographs. Some photographs are my parents' (incomplete) legacy to me, although most of my collection I have recorded myself. Triggered by these snapshots and framed within the findings from the research of this thesis, I utilise selected moments from my early life, to tell (in part) my narrative. Then, considering the similarities and differences with the research participants' interviews, I reflect on how my photographic autoethnography interacts with nostalgia, memory and legacy. Furthermore, I reveal that there are times when a photograph of one activity provokes memories of unrelated events, of which there are no photographs.

Baby Boomers or others have the opportunity to record their legacy through a combination of ‘photographic autoethnography’, oral history, family myth and history, and an autobiographical account. I reason that ‘photographic autoethnography’ can be a simple stimulus to document a family history.

The Conclusion reviews the key elements of this thesis. It brings together the nucleus of a comprehensive ethnographic study and overlays the detailed use of autoethnography to provide further rigour to the research. Others may see this research as inconsequential nostalgia. I argue that our family photographs record key moments and become valued indicators to life stories. Consequently, whether it is a personal account, or a narrative from another person, these life-stories, oral histories and photographic collections are an important social and cultural history that should be preserved.

The Interviewee (Wendy) had opened up one of her family photo albums. In the bottom corner of the right-hand page nestled a small black-and-white photograph. It had been taken in the front garden of a row of flats and it is of a group of people formally arranged for the snapshot. Taken in about 1949, there are three adults and two children huddled together in the centre of the print. The face of one of the female adults had been almost reverently obliterated with what appears to be a pen using 'Indian Ink'. Why? Wendy does not know. What story is left untold? Who etched out the features, and what was the relationship, not only between the people photographed, but also between the latter-day iconoclast and those forever captured by the camera? The photograph can spill out many particulars as to its location, time of day, and fashion through the details in the image and those of the people photographed. The background in the picture will give up cultural and social aspects of the period, but what of the vandalised face? It has been blanked out with painstaking care, no sign of rage, of a head ripped off and tossed aside. It appears that the photograph was still considered valuable, but one person became faceless, an un-named non-identity. Moreover, the use of 'Indian Ink' indicates that the obliteration may have been undertaken before the use of biros, which became popular in the late 1950s. This poses the question: can memories and counter-memories be revealed?

The study of the literature for this thesis encompasses key areas of: research methodologies (Chapter 2), family photography, history, memory (including memory-making), nostalgia, oral history and legacy. While the broad scope of the research is framed as Australian Baby Boomer family photography, my review of the literature will specifically focus on domestic/family photography, memory and nostalgia. Oral history and legacy, which are consequences from the field research, are also addressed in some detail. The compilation of personal reminiscences and providing that 'final legacy' through stories are 'memories which help us to feel relatively comfortable with our lives, which gives us a feeling of composure,' (Thomson 2006, p. 245) and I

argue a degree of control as well. It is the telling of the stories, the narratives of oral history that draws this thesis to a natural conclusion, that of the family legacy. Photography, in a general sense, can be divided into two broad categories: the practical application, and its theoretical discussion. While I have a continuing interest in the practice of photography the critical consideration in this thesis captures 'its totality as a general cultural phenomenon' (Burgin 1982, p. 3).

Family photography in Australia, the gap in academic literature

In Australia there is limited research, or informed discussion into domestic or family authored photography. The majority of the texts reviewing provincial photography consider local history, its relationship to art, the wide-ranging genres of professional photography, and the key proponents, since the mid eighteen-thirties, of the practice of photography in Australia. Batchen (2001, pp. 57, 58) claims that popular photography 'has been largely ignored by the critical gaze of respectable history'. He further argues that historians of photography have ignored vernacular photography 'because to deal with it directly would be to reveal the shallow artifice of their historical judgement'. Therefore, this thesis addresses what I contend, in the past seven decades, is an almost disregard or indifference in the research literature on a specific genre of Australian photography, that of the family collection[7] of photographs. Consequently this claim links to another tenet to consider, the metamorphosis of photography into the ever-expanding digital world and the phenomenon of social media.

The absence of academic or historic discussion on domestic Australian photography is noted by Batchen (2001, p. 41). Expatriate Australian Peter Conrad discusses his attitude and feelings towards the inheritance of his family photographs and explains that they 'contained my history', in

7 In the academic articles, journals and book chapters where family photography is mentioned or discussed a variety of terms are used. These include, but not limited to, domestic photography, family-authored photography, provisional and popular photography. For this thesis I have tended to use family photography as a general term, however there are instances where other descriptions are used to show the wide variety of interpretations available.

the opening chapter and the only section of the book dedicated to family photographs (2003, p. 9). However, he writes about the broader cultural history of Australia and uses a variety of Australian photographers to produce a pictorially inspired history based around his selected images from the National Gallery of Australia photography collection. It is apparent, to this researcher, that this book is also an important personal narrative by the author.

An article by Livingston and Dyer (2010) considers a brief history and the role of photography as a recording medium for (Australian) family memories. A more recent publication, 'Oral History *and* Photography', is reflective on post-World War II domestic photography examples from private collections or recollections (Freund & Thomson 2011). These texts introduce and discuss aspects of domestic photography; some, but not all, are about Australia. Using photography as the stimulus to their research, the authors have viewed history, family memories, and oral history, evoking the special relationship between the photograph and the story. Nonetheless these twelve 'global' histories emphasise what promises to be a useful and comprehensive body of work – discovering and recording the lives of these Australians, and others, through their personal photographic collections. However, there remains a gap in the research and I argue it underlines a unique opportunity to investigate the significance in documenting the social history of the first generation in Australia to use personal photography so extensively.

Theoretical overview

In his 1980 classic text *Camera Lucida,* Roland Barthes, discusses what he determines as the *studium,* and *punctum* of the photograph (2000 (trans), p. 27). This is significant in understanding the importance or value of the family photograph. Whilst considering the general texts that discuss photography, voyeurism, and the gaze, including those of Sontag (1977, 2001, 2008), Beloff (1983, 1985) and Berger (1972, 1980, 1982, 1992), amongst others, I introduce the more family-specific photographic

writings of Hirsch, M. (1997, 1999), and Sturken, and Cartwright (2004, 2009). Further discussions will address a collection of essays by Spence and Holland (1991), and expand on their theories of identity and community, and how they may relate to the core of this study, the family photography of the Australian Baby Boomer.

Memory has many aspects, and this thesis investigates the relationship between memory and the photograph. The work by Singer and Conway, on forgetting, closes with the argument that 'true forgetting would hardly be possible' (2008, p. 283). The past is always there, they claim, and the challenge they see is accessing it. I argue that the photograph aids in retrieving memories. While Sontag in *On Photography* was discussing Proust's mention of photographs and 'imaginative recall', she maintains that 'photographs are not so much an instrument of memory as an invention of it or a replacement' (1977, pp. 164-165). Her position is that the photograph is the channel by which we, the viewers, re-create or manufacture the memory. So what role does the photograph play in memory? Further discussion in chapters three and four, on the place of the photograph in 'memory' examine the relationship between personal memory and collective memory and as Alon Confino (1997, p. 1390) suggests, memory should not be viewed in isolation, but in the collective of 'society as a whole'.

Strongly interrelated with memory is the notion of nostalgia. This coexistence relies heavily on the principle of collective memory which Confino describes as 'an exploration of a shared identity that unites a social group' (1997, p. 1390), which I would further argue is moulded and modified by personal memory. Wilson discusses the ambivalence of nostalgia and she questions the cliché of 'wallowing in nostalgia' and the self indulgence of refusing to accept change (1997, p. 132). Then together with Holak's and Havlena's 1998 paper (p. 222), where they note the emotional 'bitter-sweet' realisation of nostalgia and the acknowledgement that the past cannot be recreated, I examine the function that the family photograph plays in nostalgic memory. The

photograph is particularly valued for its ability to: ‘remind us of what we had forgotten, make us want to forget what we remember, and bring into relief what we already knew’ (Hirsch, J 1981, p. 10). While photographs and photo albums stimulate memory, they are also a reminder of ‘a personal past and entitles us to our place in the world’ (Conrad 2003, p. 12). The recreation of memories was an aspect that was frequently repeated by all of Rose’s (female only) interview subjects in her paper on family photographs and domestic space (Rose 2003, p. 13). Similarly, with all but one of my research participants, there were various comments about remembering and how photographs ‘triggered’ memories. These triggered memories, or my claim of retrieved memories, are analogous with Sontag’s (1977) determination (outlined in the previous paragraph) of the photograph being an ‘invention or replacement of memory’, thus becoming memory-making.

While there are many means of displaying and sharing the collection of domestic or family photography, a current and more common means is the tradition of the family photo album. An aspect of this sharing is the explanation, discussion, and stories edifying a photograph or group of photographs. These stories form part of the history of the family and without these stories this photographic history has no content (Portelli 1997, p. viii). While it should not be over-romanticised, oral tradition is understood and: ‘defined as generally accepted by the society in question’ (Thomas 1990, p. 205). The photograph plays a primary role in this research, but I acknowledge that these memories, through an oral tradition, are not reliant on family photography, or photography in general.

Finally, I draw the threads of family photography, memory, story-telling (oral history) and nostalgia in relation to the work of Barthes and discuss his statement, taken up by Fried (2005, p. 556), that the photograph is never a memory, and in blocking memories the photograph becomes a ‘counter memory’ (Barthes 2000 (trans), p. 91). A similar discussion is raised by Kuhn (2010, p. 304) where the concept of a photograph can be viewed as evidence, or it can be questioned to produce other information,

the counter-memory. This argument, by Kuhn, can be summarised by acceding that a photograph can influence or sway memory, therefore proffer a 'counter' to what was (or is) remembered.

The punctum photograph

If you judge a book by its size then Barthes's *Camera Lucida*[8] might be glossed over. Even the name is not one to draw and hold a potential reader's attention unless the history of this term is known. Barthes drew his title from the Latin expression describing the nineteenth century 'light room', which as a drawing aid used a prism to permit an artist, or copier, to draw the reflected scene on to paper or another surface (Marien 2006, p. 6). Through this text, Barthes transforms the discerning and inquiring reader from a mere viewer of photography to one who has gained a beautiful, rich and, to appropriate from Gilbert Ryle (1971, p. 474), a thick description[9] of the photograph. In discussing the photograph Barthes likens the overall image to that of the *studium*: 'the inconsequential taste', while the *punctum* is that matter which: 'pricks … bruises … is poignant [to me]' (Barthes 2000 (trans), p. 27).

In establishing the attributes of a photograph, Barthes defines the *studium* as a generalness of appreciation and commitment, and being 'without special acuity' (2000 (trans), p. 26). In gazing at a photograph or poring over a family album the viewer is often drawn by the gestures, faces, or the general taste of the image. It stirs a memory; there may be recognition of people, things, or places, or in some form the viewer is able to participate in the recorded activity. This can be described as a comfortable feeling, or contentment of seeing, of looking, but not really having a meaningful connection with the presented photograph. It is a social politeness. Barthes, in assessing family photographs, notes that

8 Editions du Seuil originally published Camera Lucida in French as La Chambre Claire in 1980. Hill and Wang first published the 1981 translation in the USA in 1981, and in Great Britain in 1982, translated from French by Jonathan Cape. The 2000 edition, to which I refer, was published by Random House – Vintage and translated by Richard Howard.

9 The often used term 'thick description' is regularly attributed to Clifford Geertz. However, in his 1973 article 'Thick description: toward an interpretive theory of culture,' Geertz acknowledges Ryle's earlier work and the use of the term 'thick description'.

the *punctum* is missing (2000 (trans), p. 27), so these photographs (to him) have an inconsequential value. A problem with Barthes' argument here is that all photographs have value. It is immaterial whether a specific photograph is currently only of *studium* interest; tomorrow, or for future viewers, it may rebound to that *punctum* significance. Similarly Marianne Hirsch (1997, p. 93) claims that 'we adopt the image … the punctum, it is idiosyncratic, untheorizable,' because of our personal construct of memory and evolving history. The generations to come may discover aspects of the image that are of historic, social and cultural worth that are not relevant today.

The *punctum* is about encountering the photographer's intentions and understanding, but also being bruised by the photograph (Barthes 2000 (trans), pp. 27, 28). This understanding, in Barthes's view, is important and establishes the power of the image for the viewer (Fried 2005, p. 543). It is not only the features of the image that are remarkable in understanding and acknowledging the *punctum*; it is the personal feelings, knowledge, and the private understanding that the photograph brings to the viewer. While this assessment appears to create a conflict between the photographer's intentions and the viewer's interpretation, a perceptive question arises: can they be the same? Need the *punctum* be the same for the photographer and the viewer of the image? Unless both the photographer and the only viewer are one, Barthes' argument is that there is the probability that the *punctum* would no doubt vary between different viewers and over time.

Viewing a portrait of a long-dead ancestor, a person unknown other than through the photograph, may bring to the viewer feelings of wonderment and excitement through discovering this lingering image. The photograph will possibly trigger a plethora of other feelings and emotions related to the image, but driven by the understanding, knowledge, culture, and beliefs of the viewer. These 'feelings' are quite different to those of the forgotten photographer, and the subject of the photograph, whatever they may have been. Arguably the culture and societal norms experienced by

the subject are also important in the viewing of a photograph. So does this further enhance the argument that the *punctum* will vary depending on the viewer? I argue that there is always a trilogy in photography – the image (the scene and/or the person in the photograph), the photographer and the viewer. Barthes, in his discussions on the *studium* and the *punctum*, draws together the photographer and the eventual viewer, but little is acknowledged of the subject in the photograph. The person(s) or scene captured in that previous moment and recorded for the viewing of others is not dismissed or forgotten. This person (image) is now viewed as a third party, without feelings, direction, or continuing input to the evolution of the photograph. The essence of the *punctum* is precisely that image; that captured moment. As the photographer/s aspire to taking a photograph which is unforgettable, memorable (Sontag 2008, p.126), the subject/s can also be directing the viewer towards an alternative interpretation of it. Arguably it is the context in which the photograph or object is viewed that adds layer/s of meaning and understanding, and as stated by Lidchi (2003, p. 167) it is:

> A particularly relevant way of perceiving the overlapping meanings of ethnographic collections, since they are most frequently the result of cultural, spatial and temporal displacement.

Narratives, or the stories in this instance, from family photographs, are explained through their original nature and within the framework of readers' experiences (Angrosino 2002, p. 331). So unlike Barthes' original delineation, I suggest that the *punctum* is not static. It will always vary and change, affected by time and circumstances, but derived from the photographer and conceived by the viewer. However, there is no universal agreement that Barthes' *Camera Lucida* as a scholarly text is based on sound academic principles. Elkins (2007), in a provocative article, argues that those who address the *punctum* as a 'touchstone' are 'close to solipsism'[10]. He continues, claiming that Barthes': 'book, perhaps the least scholarly of the central texts of visual studies, has protected itself by

10 Solipsism is: 'the belief that only oneself and one's experience exist … believing that knowledge must be founded on inner, personal states of experience,' Blackburn, S 2005, The Oxford dictionary of philosophy p. 344.

shrinking away from the glare of criticism, shrivelling to a point-like punctum of its own' (2007, p. 26).

The crux of his critical review is that Barthes' text is held by many to be of academic importance, yet it does not follow the academic norm of rigorous argument. This publication, to Elkins, is a series of unsupported recollections, limited use of other (academic) voices and it offers no supporting footnotes or texts. To some degree he argues that Barthes and his supporters have a belief in him as the bearer of true knowledge.

Earlier I proffered the question of the viewers' relationship with the *studium* and the *punctum*. In the realm of family photography, viewers may show a broad interest in the collection of photographs, or could comment on the general attributes of the compilation, or of a single image. We experience this almost daily in our homes, places of work, surfing the digital forms of photographic recording such as Facebook™, or similar social media and web-based collections.

This wide and passing interest is the first element, or 'average affect' (Barthes 2000 (trans), p. 26), we show towards the photograph, the *studium.* However, there is the second element: those photographs that may arrest our gaze, and what Barthes claims will 'break' (or punctuate) the *studium* (Barthes 2000 (trans), p. 26). Our individual experiences can attest to those moments when looking at a family photograph there is that revelation of the image yielding an unheralded detail that grabs our attention or 'pricks' our consciousness (Barthes 2000 (trans), p. 27). While Barthes's terms (*punctum* and *studium*) are relatively unknown outside of scholarly reading, his two themes in understanding the role of the photograph are clearly familiar. The interpretation of a photograph can be that it is pleasant to look at – the *studium* – or it has that 'wow' factor – the *punctum* – similar in context to Barthes.

Then where is the gaze?

An interesting question is posed by Beloff (1983, p. 165), namely: 'is photography … an ill-concealed form of voyeurism?' In the context of this research and adapting the question to that of the family photographic collection, could this construe the treasured album as being a voyeuristic collection of illicit images? An important argument by Sturken and Cartwright claims that while the looking, or the gaze, is entwined with cultural, social and possible sexual identification: '[the] looking practices are strongly bound up in fantasy' (2009, p. 131). My determination of the voyeuristic action is that it has connotations of viewing for sexual pleasure, or in a broader interpretation becomes an unseemly observer of misery or malicious indignity. In discussing the female form, Pultz (1995, p. 93) considers that the image in the photograph frame is: 'socially constructed through the gaze, and has the quality 'to be looked at'. Sturken and Cartwright (2004, p. 370) maintain that the gaze allows: 'the erotic pleasure in watching without being seen'. Additionally, Wells (2004, p. 219) suggests that the photograph can also: 'exacerbate the voyeuristic gaze'. So does this make our prized collections, stored in our homes, a voyeuristic product and the family snap-shooter a voyeur? In his connection to Barthes' *punctum* Beloff (1983, p. 165) states that the photographer: 'see[s] what others do not see', thus the camera becomes the unseemly observer. The photographer becomes the conductor, waving the baton for the orchestrated life of the image and directs what we as the viewer/s see. The audience, presented with the photographer's selection, manages the interpretation of the score, that of the provided image. This, I suggest, is the fantasy of interpretation that is overlayed on the domestic photograph.

Berger (1972, p. 10) argues that the photograph is not a mechanical image but is selected from unlimited options and thus dependant on the individual's choice. That is often the case with the family snapshot. It may be what the camera does not capture that the astute or inquisitive viewer acknowledges. There may be a missing person, or amongst the

collection certain events not recorded, or possibly unfashionable, offensive or inappropriate images forever recorded to be gazed upon, to the embarrassment of the victim subject.

Any image can be in the realm of providing material for voyeurism. While the family collection may show images of nudity, it is uncommon that sexual arousal is used to obtain these photographs. Contemporary life provides numerous, complex and wide-ranging compilations of images and the gaze has varied interpretations, including the voyeuristic (Sturken & Cartwright 2004, p. 87; 2009, pp 130-131). Similarly, the viewer exercises a social and voyeuristic power in looking at and using family photographs (Frosh 2001, p. 50). The concept of gaze, in the context of the family album, I suggest is more of scoptophilia (scopophilia)[11]. Freud (1987), according to Mulvey, saw scoptophilia as 'taking other people as objects, subjecting them to a controlling and curious gaze' (1985, p. 307). Barthes (1977 (trans)-b; 2000 (trans), 2004 (trans)), Beloff (1983, 1985), Hall (1997), Sturken and Cartwright (2004, 2009), and others have shown interest in the practice of looking. This concept of looking, coupled with an invasion of privacy, I accept that in the main is what happens to the captured image, whether in hard copy or digital form. In theory discussions, the gaze is often codified through aspects of desire and control; however, the relationship is also about looking and being looked (back) at (Sturken & Cartwright 2009, p. 442). Then again, the move from an acceptable gaze to that of the invasion of privacy is one of a sliding scale, dependant on individual attitudes, cultural norms, and social standards.

There are, however, other forms of looking. The photograph is a common means of looking at, or experiencing an event and this gaze upon a photograph changes the very idea of actuality, as it is: 'shaped by the reality of the viewer's needs and desires rather than by the subject's actual "having-been-there"' (Hirsch, M 2008, p. 124). Here gaze is not

11 *Scopophilia evolves from Freudian theory as the fundamental instinct leading to voyeurism – the human trait to look, observe and controlling one's gaze. Scholars have varied in their spelling between scoptophilia or scopophilia.*

an act or performance, but more of a relationship and has frequently been linked to fantasy (Sturken & Cartwright 2009, p. 442). Often the fantasy in this realm of family photography is the images of constant happiness and harmony, not those of dissent and family conflict. Similarly little attention has been given to the relationship with the gaze where the subject is looking back at the photographer, and ultimately the viewer. Consider for a moment the often-subtle influence exercised by the subject in directing the spectator to another aspect of their space or environment, frustratingly teasing as to the intent of their gaze. While the subject can never directly return the spectator's gaze there is the promise of another story. This promise accentuates the duality of a private moment made tormentingly public through the camera. 'Looking is a powerful weapon' (D'Alleva 2005, p. 106), but it is the subject that is gazed upon, the photograph, person, or object looked at, that has captured the debate. The mountains of books on photographic techniques, in one voice, implore the photographer to ensure that the subject's eyes are in focus.

Almost to a fault the subject gazes back, eyes fixated on the lens of the camera. It has been accepted as the convention to look at the camera, to gaze with the appropriate facial expression, at the numerous unknown viewers. Then, looking at the image of a person or a group we subconsciously notice where the subjects' eyes are looking and often note or comment that one person (or more) is not looking at the camera. Where is their gaze directed, why and what is their account? Imagine a newly married couple, preening in their wedding regalia, gazing with adoration into each other's eyes. Now the same image with one person not looking at their new partner, but gazing towards a worried parent, the distance, a former lover, or just recapturing their memories of the moment? What is their story, why has it arrested your contemplation and why has it become a *punctum* moment? Conversely, the power and control of the gaze can also be from the subject, directing the viewer to other facets of the image. Is this discussion about the gaze valid, or of such minor consequence as to not be worthy of further debate?

We see the image and the people in it as a lifeless artefact, a picture having no power, but in all this lives the *punctum*. If we gaze at a photograph of ourselves, is there just a little tug to be that person again, be back there in time to relive the moment, or maybe make a change, to do things differently? This is our personal nostalgic moment, or myth. It is, as Berger claims, that: 'our perception or appreciation of an image depends also upon our own way seeing', and the photograph shows how someone once looked (1972, p. 10). There are those who decry this obsession with the past and cringe from those revealing and telling images. Of other images, there is the question of wondering who they were, of what they thought, and their lives. Consciously, we do not acknowledge that the photograph, an inanimate object, is looking back. That would be weird and creepy (Elkins 1996, p. 73). I argue that the understanding of 'the gaze' has been single-minded in its interpretation as being the photographer and viewer of the photograph, and state that the evaluation of validity, power, and influence of the subject's gaze is of equal importance, but not necessarily of equal power.

The taking of a photograph, according to Sontag (1977, p. 15), is to enjoin with the subject, in a relationship that includes 'mortality, vulnerability, mutability'. Adams, in discussing humour in photography, understands the link often found between the photographer and the subject, their pairing of roles, and the general easiness of each in the other's company (1994, p. 24). Thus, I suggest that there is, and will continue to be, that trilogy relationship of the photographer, the subject, and the viewer. However, there is the belief that the photograph has aspects of voyeurism, and is a metaphor for titillation, or an attractive thrill (Beloff 1983, p. 166; 1985, p. 71). It is not until Beloff published his book *Camera Culture* in 1985 that I consider he adequately answers the question of voyeurism and to some extent that of scoptophilia. Simply stated, photography is: 'a basic pleasurable human activity' (p. 73). I argue that it is in our nature to look, observe to see and then, devouring the scene in the photograph, we may look further passing over the *studium* and fixating on the *punctum* of the treasured photograph. Having looked at a photograph, the questions as to

its ‘story’ evolve. This becomes a pivotal point, as it is where memory, the narrative and oral history intersect with the photograph.

The myths of images

The smaller quantity, and to some extent lesser quality, of images available to Baby Boomers showing pre-1946 generations through their respective lives is at odds with the plethora of images they now possess of themselves and the next generations. The current collection of digital images are easily filed and forgotten, or discarded, to be replaced with a new reconstructed image depicting a newer time and place. Patricia Holland claims that the family group is a ‘romantic social fantasy’ (1991, p. 5) and the family photographic collection reflects this, thus creating a reconstructed pleasure and reinforcing this myth. There appears to be a new accepted practice in using digital photography: shoot many, enhance or manipulate some, and discard most. This I suggest accentuates the modern equivalent of perpetuating the saga of the romantic social fantasy in only keeping those images that reinforce that myth.

To some extent the wider community is cautious of accepting digital imaging at face value. The apparent ease with which a digital photograph can be manipulated to perform an action: ‘cause us to be more wary of representations, regardless of how real they appear’ (Reynolds 2007)[12]. The ‘truth-value’ of the digital image is open to question (Sturken & Cartwright 2004, p. 20; 2009, p. 18). Similarly the researcher’s interpretations and findings of any text or narrative need to be: ‘credible to the constructors of the original multiple realities’ (Lincoln & Guba 1985, p. 296). This truth-value and myth have a bruising encounter through family photography. Myth, I argue, is a broadly accepted and shared belief within a family, community or culture. It is there; it does not require proof; it is an accepted certainty (Passerini 1993, p. 50). Arguably this myth extends to the collections of family photographs held in the majority of

12 This quote is from a conference paper, Reynolds, C 2007, 'Image act theory', Seventh international conference of computer ethics, University of Twente, Netherlands.

homes throughout Australia. The myth of the 'always happy past', and warm nostalgic memories, is perpetuated in the edited collections of images, uniting the family (Hirsch, J 1981, p. 32). The viewer in looking through these albums is content in maintaining the myth of domestic and family bliss. Interviewee June reflected on her collections of family photographs:

> We had quite a few little happy family snaps, you know, out at picnics, snaps on holidays so, many snaps – and a lot of happy times.

Similarly Carol, when interviewed, agreed that her family collection of photographs were when:

> The camera comes out at gatherings, on holiday – oh I don't know, sort of happy times.

None of those interviewed debate the truth of their photographs. In reviewing the transcripts and recorded interviews, I conclude that the interviewees view their images as fundamental to either providing memory stimulus, or supporting their particular narrative. Truth was assumed, not questioned.

The photo album, whatever form in which it is created, has become modern chronology, the new genealogical repository of the family, surpassing the family Bible of past generations (Conrad 2003, p. 10). This Bible, the prized family possession, was handed down, often from eldest child to eldest child through the generations and in it was painstakingly recorded the marriages, births and deaths of the dynasty.

Today the 'self-appointed archivist', for the recording of the new genealogy of photographic records, wields unrivalled power and control in deciding who and what is placed in the treasured 'album' (Beloff 1985, p. 188; Holland 1991, p. 7). Langford is even more specific in questioning that the motivation for the first collections of family photographs was just that a family was: 'following [the] fashion in recording its collective history?' (2001, p. 18). In his paper on photography and power, Frosh (2001, p. 43) defines private photography as:

> …. both a ritualized domestic activity and provides conventional and definitive representations of the domestic.

Power is exercised through the perceived cultural normalities and accepted behaviours, thus influencing, and in some cases controlling, a family's own constructed or re-constructed version of their history. The scandals, former lovers, divorced partners, estranged family members or friends are missing; only those moments that are deemed proper are recorded, and often without consultation, the assumed unacceptable images are discarded. The deaths, and sickness, the unpleasant moments or the bitter family squabbles are non-existent, even if they happened to be captured by the camera.

While the family album is generally a private affair and only shown to those trusted few, there is still the need to produce the correct pictures, even if they are never to be made public (Holland 1991, p. 7). Two decades later, the Internet and various semi-public online storage facilities have changed how we offer even the most intimate and embarrassing images to the public gaze.

Discussing the affiliation between the photograph and power, debate has centred on the relationship concerning the photographer and the subject, and consequently how the resulting image is used. The power association is nestled in the control of the subject, generally by the photographer, at the time of being photographed. Nevertheless, I accept that the person being photographed may react to instructions given by a photographer, in any manner they wish.

There is the question of power in a further dimension: that of the photograph itself and how it speaks to its enduring power, similar to the legal term of enduring power of attorney. The latter yields power under controlled circumstances, while the photograph exerts a power, a voice on future viewers, and future generations, unfettered other than by context and understanding. Although Tagg (1988) discusses the use of photography in the context of legal photographic records, the mechanism of power in domestic photography is similar. In either concept the

institutional manager, collector, family archivist, or the researcher can draw on: ‘its function as a mode of cultural production … meaningful and legible only within the particular currencies they have’ (Tagg 1988, p. 63).

These collations of domestic photographs are being sifted through, edited, probably made politically correct, and written about in a managed manner by the keepers of records in families. They hold the power. They decide what truth will be allowed for future consumption. The family photo album is described as: ‘as an instrument of social performance … [that] not only constructs a story but dictates ways of telling it as well;’ (Kuhn 2010, p. 306). However, this future power is quantified, not only by the cultural practices of when it was taken and by those of the keepers and displayers of the images, but by the viewer’s own understanding of the social contexts (Aumont 1994, p. 81; Frosh 2001, p. 44).

The degree to which they honestly and truthfully represent the lives (of these Boomers) is what Burlein asserts is ‘an unchanging truth that exerts a powerful claim on the people in [the future]’ (1999, p. 311). What Burlein has implied is that there is only one truth – albeit unknown – that of the photograph. Over a decade earlier Becker suggested that there are four truths relating to the photograph (1986, pp 280-281). Truth may only be partial and asking different questions of the photograph will illicit different answers. He further claims that a truth is derived after a thorough assessment of wide-ranging evidence and not on a single item, and at best the photograph provides a fragment of a truth. The third truth of Becker’s I suggest is the most telling, namely: ‘we can never be absolutely sure of the truth’ (1986, p. 280).

Eyewitnesses will never, without collusion, provide identical information over a given incident. What they present is their version of the truth, and this is what the photograph provides, a spot in time that becomes an interpretive piece of truth. The photographer can present something false as a fact through skilful arrangement. Similarly through darkroom techniques, and now made easier in the digital realm, the image can be manipulated to substitute a different truth. The creator of the Sherlock

Holmes novels, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, a spiritualist, believed in the existence of fairies. Doyle seized on a photograph as evidence that fairies did in fact exist, and this was his truth. The photograph, by today's standards, was a crudely doctored image showing cut out fairies hovering around a little girl's head and had been produced by two girls, Elise Wright and Frances Griffiths (Bright 2005, p. 6; Mitchell 1992, p. 195).

A more public display of image manipulation, on March 31, 2003, embarrassed the prestigious American newspaper *The Los Angeles Times*. Award-winning photojournalist Brian Walski was fired after admitting that he merged two digital images of British soldiers in the Iraq war zone, to create a third (Van Ripper 2003; Wikipedia 2003). The original series of photographs were a true 'captured moment', but the journalistic integrity of the newspaper was compromised, because the created 'third' image was deemed as being false. It is agreed that the new image was not a historical fact, but it did make the image more appealing to potential viewers. There were fragments of truth in the image, but not enough truth for Walski to keep his job[13].

The final truth Becker (1986, p. 281) suggests is one of societal and cultural understanding. In expanding this argument he considers the numerous writings about, and support of photographs that make claims about the social life depicted in and by the photographs. Here the truth is related to what information and claims are made whilst using the photograph as an aspect of evidence. History, time, social placement, and individual perspectives change the manner in which photographs are interpreted (Wexler 1999, p. 249). In a comprehensive study on previously restricted, or infrequently viewed images of *The Holocaust* atrocities, Zelizer (1995) draws some significant conclusions on the construction of memory.

I acknowledge that these collections are not 'family snapshots'; nonetheless, as a record of images they highlight the bruising relationship

13 Manipulation of photographic images has occurred since the invention of photography. These manipulations are not confined to theatres of conflict, but include crime reporting, sightings of UFOs, amateur snap-shots and products of artistic creativity. The Walski incident is an example of this practice.

of memory, control, power and myth. Furthermore, Zelizer (1995, p. 234) suggests that:

> Photographs offered graphic evidence of their having 'been there' to liberate the camps. While the photographs in a sense offered a way to ground narratives of the past, their invocation demonstrated that the liberators preferred the group memory, as recorded visually, over their own individual recollections.

Similarly, as the researcher of Baby Boomer family photography, I interrogate the visual evidence and its supporting material before deciding why and how the photograph should be used (Banks 2001, p. 42). This is another perspective for a truth and there will be a differing truth in the future.

An awkward truth

The variant facets of truth became apparent to me during an interview with a Baby Boomer who was born in the mid 1950s and grew up in an inner city suburb. Her father had been a tradesman and her mother, a housewife. The interviewee, now in her late fifties, showed me a black-and-white photograph of herself as a teenager. Later she gave me a small copy for my research, if I wished to use it. The original picture was in a silver frame and standing on a ledge in the corner of the family lounge room. It was not a remarkable picture and obviously taken by a friend; it was not a professional shot, but for her it was special. She was dressed casually in a top and shorts and with the background furniture of another lounge room in another place, and another time. It was reminiscent of the 1960s and early 1970s.

Her family loved the only photograph of their daughter, sister, wife, mother, and grandmother in her teens. The image alone provided so many prompts and evidence, even truths, about that era. The clothes, the furniture, it being a black-and-white photograph, the large glazed brick fireplace in the background, her hair-style, the smile, and facial expression of the young teenager, casually posed in the fashionable

clothes of the day, against a radiogram[14]. Looking into the image so much could be found, assumed as a truth, or used as supporting evidence with other texts. Here was a typical domestic snap that was full of *studium.* There was no *punctum* in this image for me; nor is there likely to be for most other viewers. Up until now the one truth, for more than fifty-years, had never been admitted, known only to the subject and possibly the photographer. The photograph was taken on a Saturday afternoon, by her then boyfriend, at his home, and her shorts are on back to front. It is not a story of lost love, regret, or Camelot dreams, but as she tells it, one of fear, awkwardness, passion, romance, beauty and some embarrassment. Even five decades later the social and cultural norms still constrict a further truth from this photograph and suppress the *punctum*. The context is apparent; the understanding remains a mystery.

Will I, or should I, reproduce the photograph of this young girl, or ought I be led by Barthes in this decision? The second half of *Camera Lucida* is dedicated to 'The Winter Garden Photograph' (of his mother), which he does not reproduce (Barthes 2000 (trans), p. 73). Barthes' reason for this omission is that this photograph is only important to him and: 'at most it would interest your *studium*' (2000 (trans), p. 73). Barthes is making his point. He has been criticised for not including the image of his mother in the publication, and this has opened speculation that the photograph never existed (Fried 2005, p. 558). Similarly, without the supporting story, this photograph of the teenage girl is only of general interest and would offer limited other meanings. Nonetheless this quaint and increasingly revealing Saturday afternoon snapshot still speaks, but is only heard in full through the nostalgic memories of a once young girl.

14 *The radiogram in the 1950–60s was a piece of stylishly designed furniture usually on display in the lounge-room of the family home. It was a combination radio and record player. Often with a range of controls to manage the different (AM) radio frequency bands, and it was able to play 'stacks' of bakelite and plastic records at the three different speeds – 33 1/3 rpm, 45 rpm and 75 rpm.*

Photographic memory

The photograph is an artefact and: ‘used to conjure memory, nostalgia, and contemplation’ (Sturken 1999, p. 178). Sturken’s use of the term ‘conjure’ is important in understanding the role that the photograph has in its affiliation with memory. Continuing, Sturken (1999) in her argument states that the memory resides with the person and not the photograph. The photograph is not the repository of the memory, but can stimulate it, hence conjure (1999, p. 178). This understanding of the relationship between the photograph and memory is not about the preserved meaning supposedly embedded in the image, but what is offered as an appearance or manifestation. It is further argued that photographs do not narrate (Berger 1980, p. 55). I extend Berger’s point and suggest photographs provide a bridge for interpretation, immediately and in the future.

In a slightly differing viewpoint of conjuring and manifestation, Sturken, in discussing the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (Washington DC), talks of the objects (including photographs) left at the memorial being not for a general understanding, or for stories to be told, ‘but to speak directly to the dead’ (1999, p. 181). Similar to the ‘Awkward Truth’ example previously discussed, that photograph has an untold story, yet every day it conjures memories, and speaks directly to the former young woman who was wearing her shorts back-to-front.

The photograph is more than an image; it is the trigger for memory to focus the viewer’s thoughts and possibly change, or even replace them. To borrow from the photographic lexicon, truth and power in an image is not black-and-white. Truth at best can only be perceived; the power is transitional through the life of the photograph and with who controls its viewing, through social, political or economic discourses in our society (Tagg 1988, p. 94).

The picture as a testimonial to memory

Memory has become a meaningful evolution in global entertainment and evolving cultures. One of the earliest Hollywood classics, the 1942 film *Random Harvest,* used amnesia as its plot. This voyeuristic and psychological key has continued in more recent movies, such as *Total Recall, Blade Runner, Groundhog Day, The Bourne Identity,* and even the *Terminator* epics, which all have as a foundation in their plot the issue of memory. In the film *The Notebook,* James Garner plays the role as the narrator, reading a story each day to an elderly woman (Gena Rowlands) who is in hospital. The woman is Garner's film wife and suffering from Alzheimer's disease; the story being narrated is their lives as recorded through their letters to each other. Either in the creation, rendition, control, loss, or manufacture, memory is a core aspect of these genres of film. Often images are 'fed into the character's memory' to create the mental pictures for their history, or past images become the hallmark of a growing recognition and remembrance of who the character is, or was. While this is cinematic fiction, it clearly draws on the social construct of how identity and sense of self are dependent on our memory (Singer, JA & Conway 2008, p. 282). Hollywood has commodified memory, as an Internet download, or a DVD, purchased with our bread and milk from supermarket shelves. My contention is that contrary to Hollywood's fictional enterprises, Baby Boomers have the opportunity to tell their stories based on their extensive and rich collections of family images.

There are other memories

The proposition that there are two linked memories, that of recollection-memory and contraction-memory, is argued by Deleuze (1991, p. 52). My interpretation of this position is that we look back and arrange our recollections, and at the same time limit or contract what we consciously store and use, into the future. It is at some impending point that external stimuli, such as photographs, restore to our contracted-memory the recollection-memory. However, our memory or recall is at best

questionable on issues such as reliability and certainty. Suggestibility is an ominous cloud hanging over memory, and influences what is determined as being remembered, opposed to what actually happened (Schacter 2007, p. 129). Then when visual clues such as photographs are provided, the veracity of recall and memory is: 'markedly enhanced' (Singer, JA & Conway 2008, p. 280). Berger (1980, p. 59) simply states: 'the camera relieves us of the burden of memory'. My research supports the argument that memory is prompted and heightened through Baby Boomers using their family photographs to 'tell' their story.

The manner in which Confino introduces the rationale of collective memory as a uniting force, or shared identity that brings together social groups, families, or countries, suggests that it is a simple and binding phenomenon (1997, p. 1390). In defining 'collective memory' there is an underlying suggestion that it is a perceived consensus. This we can also interpret as being the 'dominant memory' within the group. Interestingly, this in turn establishes the corollary of the lesser memory; does it exist and if so what is its standing? It is argued by Perks and Thomson (2006, p. 44) that the dominant memory is a product of conflict and struggle and as such is subject to debate. In a parallel assertion, James (2006, p. 99) suggests that memory is influenced by the pain it induces and is moulded by omissions, vagueness, or the refusal to acknowledge events or happenings. This apparent apparition can be reflected in family history. Areas of conflict, separation, death, or other forms of disruption or bruising, influence memory and potentially the pool of family photographs. Thus the individual memory may become the collective and dominant memory that is accepted and communicated; then photographic collection is used to visualise and support a particular story or memory by people, of places and events (Hirsch, M 1997, p. 212). Nonetheless, this is not a declaration of absolute truth as it opens up another consideration to be addressed – that of memory-making.

Families have shared experiences and memories. Often these are generated through biographies and autobiographies, genealogical

studies, family trees, a strong oral tradition, or repetitive recounting of events. These experiences are defined as the: 'explicit crystallization of a family's shared memories', and acknowledge that having shared memories does not necessarily mean having complete agreement (Finnegan 2006, p. 178). Contrasting interpretations and images (photographs) within the family will tell a different story and provide an alternative memory. Collective memory is not a simple uniting force. It has become a circularity of supported memory, of truths, and a dominating influence on the stories and histories of the family. The power and influence of one person can establish this collective memory just as the collective memory can silence the dissident, or single voice that proffers a dissimilar memory or truth.

A brief chronicle of nostalgia

The defining and understanding of the term 'nostalgia' has changed over more than two centuries of use. Its genesis comes from the Greek *nostos*, which means a return to your home and *algia*, meaning a hurtful or agonising ailment. According to Davis (1979, p. 1), nostalgia was a medical condition described by Swiss physician Johannes Hofner, in the eighteen hundreds, as a disease showing signs of melancholy through to suicide. It was caused by extended absences from a person's home.

However, over prolonged time its medical determination transformed into a popular understanding of nostalgia being a sentimental yearning for a past that is gone and cannot be relived. Yet there is this desire by many to remember previous times with a degree of longing and angst of loss (Pickering & Keightley 2006, p. 920). Their discussion emphasises that this ache for nostalgia should not be censured, but embraced to show: 'how the past may actively engage with the present and future' (2006, p. 920). Nevertheless, a blanket acceptance of the comforting cocoon of nostalgia does not assume that this 'past' is analytically assessed (Hutcheon 1993, p. 245).

Dated from European settlement in Australia (1788), there is not the recorded, written, long and rich history, including nostalgic longing, that many other cultures in this globalised world can claim (James, P 1993, p. 31). In recounting war-time activities with New Zealand soldiers, Hutching maintained that nostalgia is 'about their activities as young men' (2011, p. 237). In a personal observation, Australian sportsman, author and journalist Peter FitzSimons (2010, p. ix) views nostalgia as follows: '[T]hrough my own experience and that of my family, the simplicity of a time long gone in Australia's past' is realised. It should not convey sadness or a sense of loss, but needs to offer the magic opportunity to recapture those former and glorious moments (Holak & Havlena 1998, p. 223). Yet it is unrealistic just to evoke, or call on the 'good times' and feelings of nostalgia. We cannot bring bygone days to life, and as commented upon by Holak and Havlena (1998, p. 222) this promotes the feeling of sadness and loss, because there is no return to the past. The memory of the 'good old days' sets up the conflicting emotions of desire and melancholy. A longing for the past is not necessarily about recalling essential details, as it is claimed that: 'one can be nostalgic for something one never experienced' (Green-Lewis 2000, p. 66). Nostalgia is a 'coping mechanism', helping to support our identity and provide an avenue for forgetting (Mannik 2011, p. 87). It is in our individual memories, however they are created, that we recall the myths, emotions, memories and richness of nostalgia. The shifting vicissitudes of nostalgia, as they impact on those interviewed in this research, are discussed in detail in chapter 4.

In the introduction I raised Portelli's argument that stories provide the content for history. He draws on horrendous atrocities in war-torn France to support his claim (1997, p. viii), but the scope of his argument can be applied across all aspects of history, including that of orality, the family, and the family collection of photographs. In analysing the reunification of West and East Germany, post-1989, Jozwiak and Mermann argue that: 'nostalgia can have a ''positive'' function, assisting in the construction of identity and community' (2006, p. 784). Collectively, families have

experienced what is recorded in their photo albums and this helps in the composition and continuation of their identity and gives them a sense of community. These experiences are talked about and then recounted within this 'family community'. New stories are created and in varying degrees they become the communal nostalgia. As the photograph is shared a story unfolds. The conversations of: 'that is, … we were, … I remember, … do you remember?', or a detailed account of the people, event, journey, or scene materialises. Story-telling, when sustained by photographs, has an accompanying sense of emotion and portrays 'each recital [as] a work of art' (Seabrook 1991, p. 173). What Seabrook refers to as a remarkable aspect of the photo-collections is their indisputable size, the many thousands of people captured within these images, and the multifarious stories they hold (Seabrook 1991, p. 180).

The question remains, what actually is nostalgia? Earlier, I recounted its medical basis and historically it has been described as a cerebral disease and a serious psychiatric condition (Routledge et al. 2011). Marketers and advertisers have 'tapped into' this nostalgic concept more recently, as it can shape consumer preferences (Holbrook 1993, p. 255; Holbrook & Schindler 1996, p. 36; Stern 1992). Those interested in cultural studies and sociology consider that nostalgia is more than a return to our home; it is the desire to experience the past once again and to languish in sentiment and the status quo. While the definitions vary somewhat, the understanding is similar. The perfection of the past or the future is seen against accepting and embracing the present (Wilson 1997, p. 132). Concluding, Wilson (1997, p. 138) observes that:

> Perhaps the real secret pleasure of nostalgia is … experiencing the reality of change, the passage of time, and the existence of that great hinterland of 'lost time' that yet somehow is still within us.

She appears to be claiming that while we embrace change we yearn for the past, a paradoxical position. It is argued that nostalgia is searching in the past while concurrently it is a starting point as a guide into the future (Pickering & Keightley 2006, p. 921). I consider nostalgia in a similar

manner to that of Routledge et al., and it is more than just a positive memory (2012, pp. 458-459):

> It is the self-focused emotional process through which people recollect experiences that imbue their lives with meaning.

There are many facets from which to reflect upon nostalgia. However, this thesis will, in the following chapters, place emphasis on the comfortable acceptance of it being memories, sometimes cloaked in a warm fondness, yet bitter-sweet, that can be experienced now and conveyed into the future. To emphasise this point I again draw on Wilson (1997, p. 139) and her acquiescence of the ambivalent nature of nostalgia and it embracing both the past and the future.

Talking about oral history

Sartre[15] stated:

> Man is always a storyteller! He lives surrounded by his and others' myths. With them he sees everything in his life, no matter what befalls him. And he seeks to live his life as though he were telling it.

Similarly McAdams (1993b, p. 27) claims that: 'human beings are storytellers by nature'. It is noted by Alessandro Portelli that oral history can be about anything and its strength lies in its focus on interviewing and fieldwork. He continues to explain that history-telling is a more apt description of its genre than story-telling, although the two are related. Portelli states that history-telling has a 'broader narrative range and dialogic formation' (1997, pp. 5-6). It is an interesting claim by Portelli that oral history is an untold story while the various tales making up 'the history' have often been repeated. In this apparent incongruity Portelli (2003, pp.24-25) is referring to the formality of the question and answer interview balanced against the casualness of conversations. That is, the interview process, through questioning, 'captures' the oral history almost

15 *An early reference to this quote by Sartre is in: Studies in social Identity, Chapter Twelve, page 254 Geertz, C 1973, Thick description: toward an interpretive theory of culture p. 6.*

in its totality, to render a near-complete account even though individual stories, or tales (even myths) have been told and re-told in the past.

There are theorists and academics who are critical of oral history and do not see it see it as particularly rigorous in the search for knowledge. Even with important historical events, communities or individuals may be divided on aspects of what actually happened (Thompson, P 2000, pp. 96-97). Oral historian, R. Kenneth Kirby suggests that interview bias and subject unreliability are issues that challenge the accuracy of such research. He then goes on to address this concern using phenomenological[16] thinking (Kirby 2008, pp. 22-23). A further issue is that people have difficulty in distinguishing between 'their current ideas and those that they held at an earlier period' (Lummis 2006, p. 256). Reliability and validity are two paradigms that are commonly raised in qualitative research in general and oral history is particular. Through participant observation the consistency of the research results can be examined and if there are critical variations, this weakens both the reliability of the data and its validity (Lindlof & Taylor 2011, pp. 271-274). However, often oral history projects are limited in their number of participants and unless it is a larger group under study then the extrapolation of a generalised and typical representative sample is problematic (Lummis 2006, p. 257). In this thesis I have not drawn on the individual experiences of the research group as being representative of the broader Baby Boomer community. Nonetheless, in the following chapters I highlight the relationship between the ethnographic research data and my autoethnographic narrative. In returning to phenomenology, Kirby (2008, p. 23) argues that we cannot know the world objectively and that we see:

> Our perceptions of things and events, experienced, interpreted, and then communicated to others, [to] form our history, our culture, our world.

16 *While the interpretation of phenomenology has evolved since the eighteenth century, when it first emerged, the current thinking is that it is the study of a particular form of life, regardless of whether anything that is said in following it out is true or false (Blackburn, S 2005 Oxford dictionary of philosophy 2nd ed, Oxford, Oxford University Press).*

Story-telling – history-telling as preferred by Portelli – is central to this thesis. Portelli (2006, p. 36) argues that where oral history is different, precious and unique (from other histories) is with the participant's subjectivity and the interpretation of what is being said, namely that:

> Oral sources tell us not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, and what they now think they did.

I use the matrix of family photography, ethnography and autoethnography to help recall the narratives, concede the myths, and grant the individual the prospect to provide an oral history of their time, thus providing that story-telling opportunity. That opportunity drives a fundamental question for this thesis – what is going to happen to these stories?

The gift of legacy

In this thesis the value of the Baby Boomer family legacy through the narratives from their photographs is explored. While the literature on legacy is extensive, little appears to be dedicated to that of family photography and the resulting narratives (see) (Gibson 2008; Hunter 2008; Hunter & Rowles 2005; Otis-Green 2003). The probability is that this legacy will inform future generations in the interpretation of the Baby Boomers' lives and the history of their respective families. Clearly no life is perfect. We should not focus on our critics as they are outside our influence and legacy is 'a personal audit that we construct around our own individual experiences' (Greiff 1999, p. 203). In considering their experiences and legacy, Baby Boomers (amongst others) are exercising their final vestiges of power[17] through their photographs and stories by managing what the future will know and hopefully understand of them.

Memories are composed to meet cultural and public acceptability (Thomson 2006, p. 245). Similarly, I suggest, our legacies are likewise constructed. However, societal standards are fluid; culture evolves and

17 *For further deliberations on 'power' see the discussion earlier in this chapter, Domestic bliss or power and control and Chapter Two, Focus on methodology – power and the photograph.*

as individuals we interpret these conventions. In turn this will influence how people remember, what they select to be told and the legacy they leave. Each individual relates to legacy differently; however, their personal approach provides them with a level of empowerment (Otis-Green 2003, pp 395-396). Other research has similarly supported this construction of legacy. Within the family, grandparents are likely to be more open to pass on family stories than if they were interviewed by strangers, or people outside of their family group (Martin, P, Hafestad & Diedrick 1988, p. 535).

Legacy is generally understood as a bequest, something from the past that is held in the present, and at the appropriate time, passed from one generation to the next. Here I direct my interest to the possessions, and more specifically the photographic collections distributed between the generations. Referring to what they call the 'legacy typography', Hunter and Rowles (2005, pp. 333-342), suggest that legacies are either biological, values based, or material. The biological legacies of health, genetics and body, while noteworthy, have a lesser importance in this discussion. Heirlooms, possessions and symbols, which make up the material legacy of a family, have a meaningful importance in my research.

Finally the value based legacy of personal, social and cultural characteristics of the family are directly linked to the family photographic collections, the material legacy. I argue that in preparing for a future in which they will not participate, Baby Boomers have an opportunity to expound their value-based legacies through their relationship with the material legacies they bequeath to the next generation. It is their narrative to tell. Furthermore, in defining this notion of legacy, I draw together a number of experiences and stories from the participant interviews that explain the interest and desire in not only discovering a legacy, but leaving one as well. While the collection of family photographs alone may be recognised as a legacy, I argue that it is incomplete. What are missing are the narratives and memories prompted by and recorded from these photographs.

Conclusion

We can have oral history without the photograph. Conversely, the photograph without a story, I argue, does not occur. There is always a story accompanying a photograph. It may not be real, the truth, or even based on fact. It may be the story we fictionalise as we flip through the pages of the photo album, but every photograph is a button to yet another memory and narrative. Even no immediate story ponders the question of why, and raises that human desire to know what is contained in the frame of the photograph. Oliver (2007, p. 11), in using an analogy to Susan Stewart's work and her study, *On Longing*[18], suggests that the: 'camera renders its object as both eternally present and suddenly ancient, generating nostalgia for the present'. This explanation merges comfortably with the positioning of Marianne Hirsch (1977), and Routledge et al. (2011; 2012) in their discussions on nostalgia.

There is, with my argument, a direct rebuttal of Barthes' attitude that the photograph is not a memory and that 'it actually blocks memory, quickly becomes a counter-memory' (2000 (trans), p. 91). He claims that the photograph is a stupefying influence, using force to fill one's sight and its pervading imbalance cannot be altered. Fried (2005, p. 556) accuses Barthes of failing to see the lack of logic in his argument and briefly (like Barthes) refers to the conflict between the thoughts of Barthes and the writings of essayist Marcel Proust. While I will not go so far as claiming the lack of logic in Barthes' argument, I do however argue that in developing his thoughts on counter-memory Barthes was linear in his interpretation of his own photographs. He used his immediate and current experience as the premise to generalise the whole. Thus my argument is that far from being a counter-memory, where the new memory over-rides previous memories, the photograph becomes a memory-maker. It adds to the memories already held by the viewer.

18 *Susan Stewart, On longing: narratives of the miniature, the gigantic, the souvenir, the collection, Baltimore, 1984, p. 113.*

I set out to appraise the literature relating to domestic photography, specifically relating to post World War II Australian research. As I have shown, there is limited Australian authored academic discussion. To an informed reader there are many other frames associated with this genre of photography that could be considered. The research has shown as much about that which is not reviewed as it has on the core issues that I have discussed.

In the introduction to this chapter I made a clear statement about what this appraisal of the literature would address. Now there is an opportunity for further work in some of the arguments I have presented, as well as considering the role that oral history, visual anthropology and biography may have on the family photographic collections of Australian Baby Boomers. As a result, this chapter is contained to what could be likened to interrelated silos of family photography, memory, oral history, nostalgia and legacy.

Camera Lucida (Barthes 2000) has been analysed and discussed by academics and critics for almost three decades. It remains a keystone in the contemporary thoughts and analysis of the photograph. Nonetheless, there is not universal acceptance of Barthes' views and the almost confrontational position by Elkins (1996) suggests that those who revere Barthes' offerings on his *studium* and *punctum* see no other way to understand the image. So while Elkins appears to be a critic of Barthes (2000), he holds his greater disapproval for those who see Barthes as the deity on photographic musings (1996, p. 73).

The passionate debates on the voyeuristic attributes of the photograph have had renewed impetus through the advancement of digital imaging and its related web-based forms of distribution and display. Modern (read digital imaging) family photography has a chameleon quality of simultaneously being provocative, public, and never-ending. The relationship, and what I argue is a trilogy between the photographer, the subject, and the viewer of the photograph, brings this about. Incumbent in this trilogy is an aspect of voyeurism. Voyeurism has a direct

correlation to power, and power has been linked to the gaze, and accepted as residing with the photographer or the user of the photograph. However, I argue that the subject, the person photographed, can through their gaze exercise some degree of power, or influence as well.

The 'family construct' is complex, ever changing, and influenced by financial, social, and cultural norms of a given society. My research is about understanding the family photography of the Australian Baby Boomer. The term 'family' I use as a euphemism for amateur, snapshot, private, domestic, or home photography, not as a defining idiom of the classic nuclear family, whatever that may be. It is not photography of the commercial world, the professional and art photography, and photojournalism. A level of complexity on this genre of the family photograph can be considered, as many families have professionally shot images, wedding albums, and portraits, while some may collect photographs as a hobby or an investment. No matter what form the collection takes, it is apparent that the keeper of these family images has associated power, control and influence in recording and displaying a particular truth.

There is a kinship between the photograph, truth, memory, the family stories and nostalgia. Which of these features holds the most influence, or which is the most important can be debated. However, I argue that the keystone in understanding family photography is acknowledging that there is fluidity in this relationship. Truth is interpretive, memory is influenced and unreliable, nostalgia is a cultural emotion, and the photograph a reality with its impact governed through time and the *studium* and *punctum* it holds for individual viewers and storytellers. As I discussed earlier, there is a personal and cultural protocol to provide acceptable photographs and stories to be chronicled as the family history, either written or as an oral account.

In the opening 'headpiece' to this chapter I deliberated about a specific family snapshot, even though the face of one of those photographed had been obliterated. Although damaged, the photograph was deemed too

valuable to be thrown away. In keeping the photograph, the 'vandal' did not hide their actual or perceived issue with that person, but acknowledged it by leaving the image in the photo album. It is part of this family's photographic legacy. Questions may be asked about this unusual action, the who and the why specifically, but they are unlikely to ever be answered, even if those who know the answers are still alive. This segregation of knowledge maintains a family secret (Langford 2001, p. 156). Had the face not been obliterated, then the photograph at the bottom of the page in this family photo album doubtless would have been passed over with minimal attention. Thus an ordinary photograph has had its *punctum* created.

Legacy is a gift and like all gifts it may be prized, or considered a nuisance and rejected. However, I have identified and demonstrated here – and it continues in Chapter Five – that Baby Boomers have a unique opportunity to manage their legacy. Numerous authors have researched and written about family authored photography since the first cameras excited the world (for example see (Adams, TD 2000; Hirsch, J 1981; Hirsch, M 1997, 1999; Musello 1979; Williams, C 1997). Disappointingly, the Australian Baby Boomers and their extensive photographic collections are not a significant part of this body of knowledge. All histories are open to elucidation and here I draw on the work of oral historian Paul Thompson (2000) who explains:

> In the broadest sense, all testimonies normally carry within them a triple potential: to explore and develop new interpretations, to establish or confirm an interpretation of past patterns or change, and to express what it felt like.

Therefore recording the narratives and (family) history of the Australian Baby Boomer is a legacy that will provide a deeper understanding and a richer social and cultural heritage for future generations to consider.

> *Autoethnographic approaches are flexible, reflexive, and reflective of life as lived; they do not follow a rigid list of rule-based procedures. Often they are multi-voiced and include interaction among researchers and participants in the research context as well as stories participants bring to the project.*
>
> *(Carolyn Ellis, 2009, Revision: autoethnographic reflections on life and work, p.16)*

The research for this project falls under the broad ambit of qualitative research (Holloway & Jefferson 2001; Lindlof & Taylor 2002, 2011). However, it is specifically ethnographic in nature and directed to family photographic collections, as discussed by Pink (2012), Edelstein (2008), Seabrook (1991) and Spence (1991). Hence, the research aims to explore and discover the stories, social and oral history, and key aspects of the lives of Australian Baby Boomers through their family photography. Ethnography offers: 'an account of the behaviours, beliefs, attitudes, and values of the people under study' (Shimahara 1990, p. 78). More specifically my research investigates the use of photography by Baby Boomers to support the recording of their lives, that of their families, and their friends. This chapter, in part, reviews the challenges I face as the researcher where I am not only conducting the research, but also as a member of that sub-group, a Baby Boomer.

Unlocking the control, influence and power of the photograph and how, or if, it applies to these family collections is a complex discussion. Power and photography continues to be of interest to academics (Lidchi 2003; Sturken & Cartwright 2004; Walkerdine 1991). Tagg (1988) drew together a collection of his essays under the title of *The Burden of Representation*. In this anthology he examines the 'complicity' of photography and how it is implicated in the exercise of social control. He argues that: 'one cannot "use" photography as an unproblematic "source"' [original emphasis] (1988, p. 119), and questions whether the photographic discourse changes and does not, in actuality, reflect meaning. Throughout this

thesis I take the position that the family photographic discourse is influenced, and in some cases changed, by its supporting narrative, memory, memory-making and ultimately through the viewer of the image.

No matter what narratives are recorded with the family photographs, the viewer will interpret this legacy at some point in the future. The power shifts from the compiler and keeper of the archives to the viewer. This 'future' interpretation of the family photographic collection is reviewed throughout this thesis and specifically in Chapter Five, A proffered legacy. In his discussion, Price (2004, p. 105) sees power residing:

> In all aspects of a knowledge system [in this thesis it is centred on the family photo-collection] including the construction of archives … and the communication chains through which it is disseminated.

Here, and argued throughout this thesis, is the perception that power is transitional, but ultimately it resides with the viewer of the image. It is how that person views, uses, and analyses the photograph that adds to its meaning and influence. There is a consequential level of power exercised in the wide-ranging genre of photography, and some of these power relationships are explored and discussed.

There are three fundamental questions to be considered in researching Baby Boomer family photographic collections. Are these photographs and the stories they encapsulate an undervalued historical and cultural history by historians and the broader community? Also, are these family photographs augmented by meaningful narratives and oral histories, and what will likely be the eventual legacy of this tapestry of history, images, and narratives?

Oral history is a legitimate means of research (Perks & Thomson 2006). Thus, introducing the research participants' personal oral histories allows them to draw on their memory and explain those recollections in their own voices (Perks & Thomson 2006, p. ix). Consequently this adds to the researcher's knowledge and understanding of a time and place in the participant's life. Whether these recollections are dependent on

supporting photographs is not critical. Arguably, this notion of knowledge building is established through the broader combination of participant observation and narrative (Martin, R 1995, p. 24). It is important to also understand the social context of these oral histories as this helps to reveal how individuals make sense of their lives, (Taylor, P 1997, p. 6). However, in this thesis, the artefacts of family photography predicate these moments, or individual stories. The inherent progression into an autoethnographic account, and the sixth chapter to this thesis, is explained and developed in some detail latter in this chapter.

Rings of research

One recurring concept of study was to 'onion' my research (Lincoln & Guba 1985, p. 314). Having the outer rings of the onion representing the Baby Boomers allows me to pare open the various filters (rings) to establish the narratives of value from my research participants. It is a metaphor reflective of the aperture rings and filters that control the light in a camera. I am able to reveal the layers of data and discover the detailed stories from the lives of these Baby Boomers. The narrative analysis involving oral history is a complex explanation of truth, myth, imagination and interpretation (Portelli 2006, pp. 35-36).

'Onioning' is an interesting approach to the complexity of narrative analysis. As the enquiry progressed the research also needed to uncover those special moments of reflection by the participants. The photographs, with the supporting stories and shaped recall, provoke slices of memory and nostalgia that gradually become revealed. For those interviewed in this project (or similar research) they have the opportunity to present themselves as an: 'authentic voice', thus adding weight to the narrative (Reed-Danahay 1997, pp. 137-139). In this context authenticity is not being used as the only voice for the narrative. All stories are constructed in some manner; however, the story-tellers are positioning themselves as being trustworthy, accurate and genuine with the information being provided. Other ethnographic researchers suggest

that those being researched may not realise that through ethnography they too have a voice (Ellis, Adams & Bochner 2011, p. 280) and in a manner that: 'other modes of research do not' (Poulos 2009, p. 34). Qualitative research seeks to explain the why, interpret and explain the data (Lindlof & Taylor 2011, p. 12), and offer a voice to those being studied.

In comparing this relationship to the peeling of an onion and the revealing of information, Blier (1993, pp. 184, 185) states that: 'the most important secrets are there … for everyone to see'. In a paper on cultural methodological exploration, Kuhn similarly uses the onion metaphor:

> Memory work is rather like peeling away the layers of an onion that has no core: each level of analysis, while adding more knowledge, greater understanding, also generates further questions (2007, p. 290).

Throughout this thesis I seek to unwrap the various stories and gain an insight to the importance of the Baby Boomers' family photographic collections.

The methodological 'ring'

It is suggested by Hartley (2004, p. 85) that in communication research there are three types of research; quantitative, qualitative, and ethnographic. It is noted by Denzin that 'ethnographic texts do not just speak for themselves; they have to be read and interpreted' (1989, p. 180). Further expanding on the understanding of ethnographic research, Lindlof and Taylor (2002, p. 16) argue that it does not imply a single method or type of data analysis. They consider the concept of participant observation and participant role as common strategies. This is where the researcher is immersed within a specified group to gain an understanding and clear perception of that group's attitudes and beliefs through their knowledge and life experiences (2002, p. 145).

My principal interest centres on the individual interview so as to understand what 'family, cultural and social histories' are represented in

the photographic collections of the Baby Boomer. As I have indicated earlier there is the additional concern of researcher bias creeping in for the cultural construct ethnographer – the participant observer (Hartley 2004, p. 85; Lindlof & Taylor 2002, p. 145). I suggest this is an issue for ethnographic researchers when they are deeply immersed within the group being researched. I also contend, that in the main, all of these issues can be neutralised through ethical research management and: 'we must value ambivalence and engage in permanent vigilance when analyzing the content, form, conditions, and author(s) of a life' (Adams, TE 2008, p. 185). Being the researcher and catalyst in the interviews, my interpersonal and management skills are essential in attaining valid responses and having full engagement by the participant. However, I understand that the focus of my research is the rich, detailed, and personal stories of Baby Boomers, not just their photographs.

According to Hall (1997, p. 32): 'meaning has to be actively "read" or "interpreted"'. Arguably meaning is never identical between different parties; it is interpreted and based, *inter alia,* on a common understanding. These shared moments uncover and verbalise deep beliefs, myths, and memories from the individual's life. It is these spots of time that provide abundant and meaningful stories. Thus oral histories display aspects of the lives of the Baby Boomer through their connection with family photographs.

Oral: beyond a recording

Exploring the lives of the Baby Boomer is more than a search through formal histories, academic works and a studious appraisal of photographs, no matter how interesting they may be. This exploration indicated another 'ring of the research'. Scholars such as Thompson, P (1990; 2000), Ritchie, D (2003) and Thomson, A (2011a) emphasise that the narratives are about listening – listening to the voices of those being researched. What they have uttered, the interpretation of their emotions,

their feelings, their passion, and their memories, are vital in comprehending the information.

While oral history, the recording of others' lives and memories, will include these determinants from the participant's perspective, there is the need to avoid viewing, judging, or interpreting these rich and detailed stories through one's cultural background and understanding (Martin, R 1995, p. 71). They are their stories and their history. Interviewing and developing an oral history resource is more than turning on a recording device and letting the subject talk.

The techniques of questioning, note taking, explanation, understanding and analysis are vital (Martin, R 1995, p. 31). However, a critical consideration for all oral historians and researchers is empathy with the interviewee (Walford 2009, p. 279). It is necessary to clearly understand when to probe deeper, or hold back, pose an open-ended question, be specific, or to allow the conversation to flow. Besides being aware of the non-verbal communication from my subjects, my own non-verbal responses play even a more important role in the interview process. These oral sessions are about the lives and memories of those people being interviewed, and their families. It is not about my opinions, concurrence, or disagreement over an issue or of their history. This is their story, not mine. Therefore, my non-verbal responses are the triggers to keep the conversation running (Martin, R 1995, p. 37). Thompson, (1990, p. 21) talks of oral history as a means of providing a 'shared meaning' with others. Listening cannot be overlooked as it is critical in showing empathy with the participant and drawing out the depth of their stories (Ellis 2004, p. 87).

Spots of time

During a conference I heard a brief reference made to a line from *[The] Prelude,* (Wordsworth (1979) [1799; 1805; 1850]) and what are referred to as 'spots of time'. Together with the onioning or layering of this research, the 'spots of time' focuses on the value of the evolving

narrative. I found congruence here as it converged with similar concepts in photographic discourse, with which I was already familiar. It was Barthes who describes cameras as 'clocks for seeing' (2000 (trans), p. 15). This photo-clock gives the viewer a glimpse of a past, and its 'spot of time'. Peter Bishop discusses the conflicts and 'a fundamental tension' between today and the past, the relationship of what he calls: 'memory and immediate sensual experience' (1995, p. 62). He describes this relationship between the past and present through the constructs of memory. The sensual experience is also an orthodox means to differentiate between the accepted viewing of history and the glowing warmth of the past. However, the two are not mutually exclusive (Pickering & Keightley 2006, p. 926). Langford calls the family snapshots frozen moments in time, yet they are still able to tell an enduring story (2001, p. 97). Referring to these photographs as showing spots of time, or frozen moments, I suggest is too restrictive. Building on Bishop's (1995) 'tension' I consider these images as captured moments where there is a constrained latitude of memory and interpretation. Whether these photographs are considered spots of time, or captured moments, the sensuality and bitter-sweetness of nostalgia are represented through power and the dominating narrative.

Influence of the photograph

In the interviews I encourage the participants to tell their stories, and relate their experiences using the photograph or the family photo album as the prompting artefact. Through this process I gain some understanding of the participants' relationships with their photography and photographs. There is a preconception, a 'given', by some, that these denotative connections to the images are a mixture of celebration, history, and nostalgia. While Wordsworth in the *Prelude*, (1979, pp. 428-30) draws us to his spots of time, Peter Bishop has argued that these moments: [are] 'often reduced to a mundane sensual realism' (1995, p. 63). The discerning reader can draw a similarity, even a relationship, to

Camera Lucida, and the constructs of the *studium* and the *punctum* (see Barthes 2000 (trans)).

Yet this raises another consideration as outlined by Fiske (1982, p. 145) who argues that the meanings and understanding of a photograph are dependent on the 'dominant ideology', and cultural experiences by the viewer. Subsequently, these memories and associated images become the dominant historical narrative of the future (Leavy 2005, p. 4).

Domestic bliss, power and control?

Domestic or family photographs are often lovingly recorded in a collation of albums. Others are tagged to walls, scattered across the Internet, or stuffed in a box only opened to force more photographs into its shrinking space. In discovering their *punctum* these precious photographs also show the vibrancy of what are often mundane, but nonetheless interesting lives. Photographs have: 'deep emotional context [and a] primary means through which we remember events' (Sturken & Cartwright 2009, p. 18). There is, through family photography, and specifically that of the Australian Baby Boomer, a discoverable richness in what people do. However, while these collections are a record of family life they need to be interrogated further to understand the complexities and drama in personal lives (Holland 2004, pp. 151-154).

Others suggest that to deliver authenticity and the accompanying stories through a photograph or a series of photographs can be considered a challenging impossibility (Krauss 1999, p. 301; Smith, J 2001, p. 13). This parallels a quite personal reflection by Rosenblum (1991, p. 244) that is appropriate for this thesis. In her post breast-cancer appraisal she questions the camera's ability to 'picture richness of this relationship [between herself and her partner], the depth of the contact, the quality of our interdependence'. Rosenblum was dying when she wrote this, but even in the final five weeks of her life, she was open to exploring the greater possibilities of what the photograph could convey. While there is a banality in our existence, the photograph in capturing that spot in time

can impart a sense of a person's being. I argue that the connection between the viewer and the photograph is where the richness lies. It is through this relationship that the power, control and value of the image is realised.

Where is the power and control?

Some discussion on the power relationship generated by the denotation of the photographic image needs to be considered. Photographs record scenes and images that are understood through 'cultural common sense' (Fiske 1982, p. 91). An image of a family in the yard of a home denotes understanding of relationships, structure, social standing, and a level of affluence, conditioned by the viewer's own cultural background. However, the photographer may use any number of techniques to provide drama, pathos, humour, numerous other emotions, actions, or even inactivity to further embellish this captured moment. These techniques, the connotations of the photograph (Fiske 1982, p. 91), are a manifestation of power to control the image and the people being represented. I see this power concept in four parts: the initial taking of the photograph; its connotation (even that terminology 'taking' or 'shooting' suggests power, or control of one over another); the keeping of the resulting image(s); their encoding; then the eventual display of those image(s); their transmission; and decoding. Finally there is the power of convention, or organised social behaviour around those images.

The notion of power is further reinforced in Prosser and Schwartz (1998) when they describe the metaphorical similarities between the rifle and the camera. In both actions the operator loads, aims, shoots, and in the case of the photographer, 'captures' the target (Prosser & Schwartz 1998, p. 119). A further expansion of these metaphors can be recognised in the basics of communication theory (the photograph is another means of communication) in the elements of encoding and decoding necessary for communication (Marston 1963, p. 28). These four aspects: connotation; encoding; transmission; and decoding, are interrelated, but may be

subjected to different controls by different people and at different times. The control is not constant and is ever changing. In discussing Foucault's (1983) work on power, Gerrie (2003, p. 15) states that it is not necessarily the power of the strong over the weak: '[but] the control that all individuals exercise over themselves and others through widely accepted forms of generalised behaviour'. This is further highlighted by Holland (2004, p. 151) in discussing one of the most photographed family activities, the wedding. She suggests that it is the status of the ceremony, which directs the photographer to follow certain rules in recording the event. Her argument is that it is not so much when the wedding photographs were taken (or by whom), but that they conform to a set of perceived rules and conventions.

Up to the 1990s the professional wedding photographer was expected to ask permission to photograph any aspect of the wedding ceremony in the church[19]. Often that permission was denied, even though the bride and groom requested the ceremony be photographed. Since 1999 Australian civil marriage ceremonies have outnumbered religious ceremonies and by 2013 seventy-two and a half per cent of all marriages were non-religious (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2012b; Statistics 2015). In the decade since Holland (2004) observed the conventions of wedding photography, much has changed. Today, anyone, even children, using compact digital cameras or smart phones are able to 'snap away' during the service, whether in a church or not.

However, there remains some conformity in the compilation of the photographic record. This can be seen in photographs of the family celebration, an evening with friends, those special rites of passage, the school or sports events, and so the list can grow. While this accord in photographing some of the family rituals appears to be common practice, it is only a framework for the resulting narratives. Furthermore, and despite some recent conjecture in social and the mass media over the appropriateness of parents and grandparents taking photographs of their

19 *Having been a professional photographer, including a wedding photographer, for more than twenty-five years, I have experience and professional knowledge in this area.*

children in public places[20] (Clarke 2014, p. 13; na 2006, p. 12), there is an acceptance at these family events that photographs will be taken to record the moment. Both the photographers and the subjects are complicit in remembering the good times, and the media are complicit in adding to the popular belief that volumes of photo albums are squirreled away in cupboards and under beds (Williams, 2006)[21]. Even in the informal genre of the family snapshot there is a conventional wisdom that is followed, and only the socially acceptable images are open for public viewing. This does not mean that inappropriate images are not captured, just that they are not publicly viewed. These types of images may be used for titillation, humour and/or embarrassment, but with an underlying presumption of power and possibly control and what (Schwartz, O 2010, p. 645) determines as: 'truths on desire and power relations'.

The story, in conjunction with an image, is never fully told and it never can be. Of course social contexts change and with that the story evolves yet again, but there must be some level of commonality for it to be understood (Holland 1991, pp. 2-5). Therefore, the power is ever-changing, either when taking the picture or when viewing that image later, as the control or the power has shifted from the photographer to the 'displayer' of the photograph. This then raises the question of where the power now lies when: 'the impact of the photograph, for anybody who looks at it closely, is heightened by all those unanswered questions' (Finn 1994, p. 133). Further questions arise when social media and personal photographs are introduced to the discussion. This issue is considered later in this chapter.

Using the snapshot in the interview process gradually extracts from the interviewees woven fragments of memory and fantasy, conjoined with their relationship to the social dictates of the day. Initially the question behind viewing each photographed is, why was this particular photograph

20 *Similar media stories include Photos of Kids Banned, Sunday Times (WA), p. 13, March 13, 2005; Parents angry over nipper photo ban, The West Australian p. 13 November 7, 2005; Camera ban for children's concerts, The Advertiser, p. 27, June 7, 2006; Eisteddfod Ruling 'Hysterical photo ban', The Advertiser, p. 12, June 8, 2006.*

21 *Samantha Williams is a former reporter with the Adelaide newspaper, the Adelaide Advertiser.*

taken? I suspect the answers from the photographer will continue to be many and varied. In discussing ethnography and the image, Bloustien refers to, and I concur with the claim, that: 'the camera is always used with an audience in mind' (2003, p 2). While the photographer may not be thinking of how, when, where, or to whom the resulting image may be displayed, the moment is still being captured, to view later. With the subsequent story-telling the power shifts yet again and is influenced by the narrator discussing what is in, or represented by, the photograph (Poulos 2009, pp. 13-14). For me as the researcher, the question of what the photograph represents is important. It is the crux of the investigation into the Baby Boomer's family and personal photography and how this relates to the telling of the family narratives.

A photographic truth

Historically, truth and photography have had an uneasy relationship. In its early evolution the photograph was seen and accepted as the single truth. Barthes (2000 (trans), p. 87) suggests this acceptance of truth in claiming a photograph never lies. However, he then qualifies this assertion by explaining that the truth is about the existence of the photograph and not it's meaning. While it is exciting and wonderful to have photographs from the participants, it is their sense, understanding and interpretation that are of significance here. Their photographs are real. They can be seen and touched, but the representation from the photograph becomes the debatable issue. It is that: 'memories and experiences – are in part moulded by a series of existing myths, images and ideologies' (Finnegan 2006, p. 180). The photograph represents an interpretation of their truth and is influenced by constructed memory, re-remembering and the associated narratives.

In creating the photograph, I suggest that there are two types of truth: denotation, the unedited reproduction of what was photographed, and connotation, the means, the effects used in how the scene was photographed (Price, D 2004, p. 72). The truth debate between an exact

replication of a scene (denotation) and the constructed, posed, arranged, or special techniques used (connotation) continues. Even without resolution, what it shows are the layers of the 'onioning' effect to expand the understanding of truth in photography. Barthes strongly argues that: 'the photograph possesses an evidential force' (2000 (trans), p. 89). However, it is the interpretation of that evidence that adds another layer of truth when viewing an image. Similarly, in the interviews for this research the photographs revive memories, but what can then be determined as the truth? Is the truth the first, and only the first, memory stimulated by the photograph, or does the truth grow as the memory is refreshed? Then there is a different truth when another person viewing the image brings to it their understanding, their memories, their interpretation, and again history is changed. There are many truths in photography. Becker questions as to: 'whose truth the photograph asserts' (1986, p. 279). The truth is 'onioned', peeled away to reveal more, often changing and forever linked to memory, understanding and subjectivity.

Further to this understanding of the rationale behind the taking and subsequent viewing of the photograph is the question of subjectivity. Barthes (2000 (trans), p. 55) claims that: 'absolute subjectivity is achieved only in a state, an effort of silence', allowing the detail of the photograph (or information) to enter: 'into effective consciousness.' In accepting this as a premise of subjectivity, it is unlikely that the photographer, the subject, or the viewer of the image can avoid the influence of some aspects of their own histories, biases, or beliefs in their interpretation of the image and its surrounding stories. This is important not only with the taking and subsequent viewing of the photograph; it is critical for the researcher in the manner in which the research is conducted and later analysed. Subjectivity, the meaning that all of my research participants provide, is essential to their narratives – as it is their story to tell.

I have previously argued that the changing social context is a definable factor to consider. Therefore, I question whether objectivity is attainable

in ethnographic research and even if so, whether it is necessary. I suggest not. Here I draw on the work by Douglas (1994) where she discusses the stories of young Australian women travelling overseas during the 1950s. It became evident to her that the events to which the interviewees referred were not fixed in time, but they can, and do, move with memory: 'across the continuum of life experiences' (1994, p. 231). Similarly, Duruz also challenges the concepts of memory, as it: 'may be constructed as a landscape not only for a making and remaking of the self, but of our social understanding of the past' (1994, p. 177).

As the researcher, I have therefore brought my background, understanding, knowledge and biases, (amongst other attributes both good and bad) to the interviews, analyses and narratives of these personal stories of Baby Boomers' lives, punctuated by their photography. In acknowledging this constraint of subjectivity through the processes of the research, I argue that it adds to the structure, understanding, and value, of the collective memory of all participants. Subjectivity should never be negated.

Images on display

As photography became more accessible to the consumer through mass production and marketing after the Second World War (na 1950)[22], the photo album became the main repository of the ever-growing collection of the family snapshots. While there were more photographs to be viewed, again only the selected privileged few saw the collection. The keeping and showing of the family photographs changed significantly during the first 170 years of photography (Reme 1993, p. 27; Walker & Moulton 1989, pp. 159-160). Here we see that the power of display for the images rested with the owner of the album and produces: 'an unchanging truth that exerts a powerful claim on people' (Burlein 1999, p. 311). Although Burlein was considering the conventions of 1950s family albums to those

22 *The Eastman Kodak Company newspaper, Kodakary, has a sub-head stating: 'A newspaper for the men and women of Eastman Kodak Company.' The newspaper reports on business results, forecasts and social activities of the company.*

of the 1990s, this argument is still valid, to a point. With the advent of the Internet and digital photography this, power/convention/control perspective of the family snapshot has changed. The control of which images are displayed or shared remains in the same hands, but once these images are placed in the digital world of the Internet they may be accessed by anyone at any time, providing a person has entry to the medium. Social network and online photographic databases are able to store an infinite number of digital images. The control now is often no longer in the hands of the original owner of the image. Once an image is shared, or made available for unfettered circulation via the Internet, its possible distribution is almost limitless.

The older generations may not see this as being important, as they have not always embraced technology as the epitome of their personal communication and record holding needs. It is the 'net generation' having grown up with the computer, the Internet and now social media, who see the concept of blogs, personal websites, and sharing of their digital images with family and friends through the Internet and broadband connections as natural and proper[23] (Sproull & Day 2006, p. 13). This sharing is now even wider than family and friends; it has expanded to include strangers, people who are only known through a Facebook® or a similar Internet 'hook-up'.

The almost universal acceptance of this fast growing social media phenomenon will impact on how the family photograph is understood and valued in the future. The acknowledgment that showing and sharing photographs (and their stories) was a social and family affair, generally limited to friends, has changed since the late 1990s when digital photography became accessible to the amateur photographer (van Dijck 2010, p. 407).

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23 News Corporation Chairman and Chief Executive, Rupert Murdoch at the AGM in Adelaide on November 15, 2006 reported that the company supports a $100 computer project directed to children and teaching: 'We are very hopeful it will make big changes to the world.' He went on to say that as the world's population increases, soon to eight billion, many will continue to be computer illiterate and if they can be educated to use the inexpensive computer it will make a huge difference to the media and in the home. News Corporation is a major sponsor of 'One Laptop Organisation' http://one.laptop.org/about/mission *Personal email from Stephen Browning, Head of Corporate Affairs (Aust.) News Limited, dated September 4, 2013.*

Through social media sites, such as Flickr®, Tumblr®, or Instagram®, this once controlled and semi-private activity is now open to the world. 'In Flickr, you can give your friends, family, and other contacts permission to organize your stuff – not just to add comments, but also notes and tags' (Yahoo!7 2013). This broad-based sharing adds a further complexity to the issues facing future researchers and keepers of the family archives, history and photographic collections, as the notion of factuality and authentication may be questioned.

The framing 'ring' of research

The research technique of 'snowballing' is used to 'recruit' participants and their immediate contacts to develop a chain of response to widen the research pool (Stewart, DW, Shamdasani & Rook 2007, p. 46). Explained by Biernacki and Waldorf (1981, p. 141), snowballing:

> Yields a study sample through referrals made among people who share or know of others who possess some characteristics that are of research interest.

All research recruitment and sampling methodologies have some limitations (Lindlof 1995; Lindlof & Taylor 2002). As a researcher I am cognisant of the limitations and critiques of the snowballing methodology (Cohen & Arieli 2011; Lindlof & Taylor 2011; Rao & Perry 2003). To participate in the research, the qualities I require from the snowballed recommendations are that the potential interviewee is a Baby Boomer, born in, or resided in Australia during the 1950s and 1960s and has a collection of family photographs. Other than six of the research participants[24], the sample is constructed through snowballing. Due to my extensive range of contacts, both professional and personal, I ensured that less than twelve per cent of the interviews are in my network. The initial approach to participate is through a small number of colleagues,

24 *The exceptions are a 'cold call' approach to a group of obvious Baby Boomers relaxing in a café, and passing around black-and-white photographs and a woman who was born and grew up in Adelaide, who at the time of the interviews was living in the US. I discovered her online Blog and contact is made through that medium and email. Others are by a direct approach from myself. The final two are sourced from media articles that address some of the family photographic and oral history aspects in which I am interested.*

former professional associates and friends. However, in most instances those personal relationships are not included in the research sample group as they are the means to reach a wider audience.

The participants

Over a thirty-month period between 2010 and 2012, I interviewed thirty-eight people. This was followed up with a further eight interviews in 2013 and 2014. A comprehensive breakdown of the participants can be seen in Appendix 1. The gender was evenly split; twenty-eight are early Boomers and twelve are late Boomers[25]. From the initial contacts I was able to 'snowball' into the wider community and interview people in South Australia, Western Australia, Victoria and New South Wales. I interviewed non-Baby Boomers to bookend the research and inform myself of the relationships between the generations, and the evolving recording of family activities through photography. Finally, I interviewed four experts who can be grouped or categorised as representing the emerging digital image and domestic software industries. Due to proprietary information being discussed, these participants requested that their organisations not be disclosed. In a broad sense these people represented publishing, advertising/marketing, printing and the computer hardware/software industries. The education level of the research pool is comprised of eleven participants with trade qualifications, sixteen with university degrees, three with business qualifications and sixteen who completed at least three years of high school.

A participant's autoethnography

A further thread to this research is the autoethnographic treatment driven from the participants' stories and how they buffet my own recollections and add another level of understanding in this study. Thus, I also became a participant in this inquiry. To clearly identify as a Baby Boomer

25 *For this research I determined that early Boomers were born between 1946 and 1955 and late Boomers were born between 1956 and 1965.*

and where I fit within this generation, following is a condensed background to my upbringing, family, education and careers. Throughout this thesis I draw on the occasioning encounters with my life events from the narratives of other Baby Boomers in the research pool. The theories of photographic autoethnography and oral history are conjoined to provide another level of analysis to this research. Although I am grouped by birth with the other research participants, my life has been significantly different. I do not extract any conclusions from this difference. However, I can analyse some similarities and variances with others in the research pool, while recognising that our various lives cannot be extrapolated to that of all Baby Boomers living in Australia. This approach positions me as a part of the research cohort.

I am the youngest child in the extended family of my parents' generation. My two older sisters were teenagers when I was born into this middle class family living in Myrtle Bank, a south-eastern suburb of Adelaide. Both my sisters were married by the time I was eight years old. My father, having served in the Australian Army during World War II, was not discharged until July 1947. Prior to the war he owned his own fruit and vegetable (greengrocer) business, home delivering the produce from a horse-drawn dray. While our family was not affluent, having his own business, I was told, allowed my father to support the family with minimal discomfort throughout the depression years. My maternal grandmother also lived with my parents for more than twenty-five years. The family home was a two-bedroom Californian bungalow design, constructed in the mid 1920s. A standard, quarter-acre block of land was purchased by my parents and a local builder built the house for them, with my father working as his part-time labourer. My mother was a housewife and she did not have paid employment during my time living at home. As a child I was allowed to roam the district and play in the local creek and paddocks with other children from the area. Parental supervision was minimal, yet my parents always seemed to know what I was doing and where I had been.

Attending a kindergarten was not as popular in the early 1950s as pre-school facilities are for younger children today. However, I attended the local 'kindy' for a year before spending seven years at the Glen Osmond Primary School. After four years at Unley High School I had progressed further in education than anyone else in our family. During my schooling and then into my thirties I was active in a variety of sports. Through Scouting I saw a world outside of our modest suburb, and experienced camping, canoeing and hiking. At sixteen I left home and joined the South Australian Police Force as a cadet. The three years training at the Fort Largs Police Academy was fulltime, demanding and challenging. After graduating, I served as a police constable in Adelaide and at country police stations for a further three years.

In 1969 I joined the Royal Papuan New Guinea Constabulary (RPNGC) as a Sub-Inspector of Police and served in Port Moresby and Rabaul for the three years I was overseas. On returning to Australia in 1972, I completed three-months of intensive training, became a firefighter and later an officer in the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service for almost fourteen years. My career changed direction once again, and I established the first media liaison function for the Fire Service, which evolved into a public relations position. During this period in my life I studied part-time and became the first person in my family to attend university and gain an undergraduate degree. For the following twenty-five years I held a number of executive level, corporate communications positions in public transport and then the energy sector. Concurrent with these positions I was also the (South Australian) State Media Liaison Officer for ten years. I was responsible for the media arrangements for major Heads of State visits, including Pope John Paul II, various members of the British Royal Family, other European Royalty and leaders from Europe and Malaysia.

My first marriage ended in divorce after four years. My second wife and I have been married thirty-nine years and we have three adult children and five grandchildren. After returning from living overseas in New Guinea

and Asia I established myself as a photographer, a part-time business, which I continued for almost four decades. The genre of photography that I undertook included corporate clients, sports photography, some photojournalism and family photography – weddings and other significant life events.

Another corporate position was offered to me as an executive member of a developing energy provider and in 1994, with my family, I moved to Perth, Western Australia where we lived for twelve years. During this period my career evolved once again. Initially, in 1998, I took on a part-time lecturing position at the Edith Cowan University (ECU) and from 2001 I was appointed as an Adjunct Lecturer in the field of public relations and advertising. I also completed my Masters at ECU before returning to Adelaide in late 2005. Since 2006 I have been a Course Coordinator, part-time lecturer and sessional tutor at the Magill Campus of the University of South Australia (UniSA). My employment at UniSA has also included eight years' offshore teaching in Singapore and Hong Kong in a variety of communications subjects.

This précised overview of my background outlines that while I am a Baby Boomer, my life has been appreciably dissimilar to others in the research group. Being a police cadet, and later a police constable, exposed me to a world most do not encounter. At seventeen I witnessed my first autopsy and at twenty I had to tell a mother and father that their seventeen-year old daughter had been killed in a motor vehicle accident. Whilst in Papua New Guinea I faced riots and lived in spartan conditions in the jungle. However, I grew to appreciate the country's beauty and the unsophisticated village life of the more remote communities. Then as a fire fighter in Adelaide I experienced the devastation of fire, where homes, businesses and lives were destroyed – then the terror of fighting ravaging bush fires in 1983. In the corporate world my experiences changed yet again. Here I was responsible for large budgets and played a significant role in multi-million dollar projects. Now, employed in the higher

education sector, I have developed a passion for mentoring the emerging generation of communication professionals.

There are numerous other stories and often light-hearted experiences in my various careers, some of which are commented on in the following chapters in this thesis. In Chapter Six I emulate the recurring theme from the research data – the participants returning to their early memories – and apply photographic ethnography to reflect on my formative years.

The interviews

In the interview process I use the broad direction of Paul Thompson's (2000) *Voice of the Past,* and the *Oral History Handbook,* by Beth M Robertson (2006) as a guide in formulating the style of the conversations. Having a varied professional background and extensive experience in interviewing, group discussions and meetings, I am confident to engage with most people and have the ability to carry an interview to a conclusion. Each interview is recorded and appropriate field notes taken during this time. The interviews are semi-structured around core elements of the research. Being only partially planned allows versatility in the content of the interviews while enabling the voice of the interview participant to be heard. Paul Thompson (2000) refers to this as flexibility, the willingness to listen and understanding that it is the participant's story being told. The intent of this approach is to seek their experiences and thoughts. Thus the participants tell their own story with minimal prompting (Ritchie 2003).

All the interviews were undertaken in a relaxed atmosphere, often in the participant's home. Two interviews were conducted in their place of work, four others in coffee shops and three by email (due to their restricted availability, or the person being overseas at the time of the interview). The circumstances and locations of the interviews were at the interviewees' preferred location, and created an informal atmosphere, allowing the discussions to flow in a natural manner.

I am interested in what they have to say, not in what I wished them to say (Portelli 2006, pp. 38-39). This allows the participants substantial leeway to talk about their lives, centred on their family photographic collections, while maintaining a framework of relevance. While 'framing' can be defined in a number of ways, I have adapted the characteristics of inclusion, exclusion and emphasis to determine the selection for my research (Hallahan 1999, p. 207; Sison 2009, p. 70). It is a means of making sense of the activities in people's lives and 'a natural part of human communication' (McLean & Phillipps 2009, p. 302).

In setting up the interviews, no list of prepared questions were formulated, however a flexible guide and prompts for the interviews are my preferred method of engagement with the interview participants. The opening discussion addresses what the research is about, their photographic activities and permission to record the interview. From that point the interviewee is allowed to take the conversation in their preferred direction. Where necessary the participants were prompted for their stories and those of their family. As the session progressed, issues covering their collection and display of photographs, storage, captions and sharing of the images were addressed. When looking to the future, or legacy of the collection, some emphasis is placed on the how, and the oral history and narratives that would supplement the transference of the collection to the next generation. While this is broadly a question-and-answer approach, the theme of the interview is dictated by the participant's family photographic collection, their related narrative and what is important to them (Tanner, Kasinger & Richardson 2009, pp. 100-105).

Boundary setting

The seminal work by Spence, *In Family Snaps* (Spence, J & Holland 1991) discusses the: 'past that we belonged to' – Cartier-Bresson had his *Decisive Moment* – then there are the little details (Price, D 2004, p. 73; Westerbeck & Meyerowitz 1994, p. 155) and Barthes wrote of the

photographer's second sight as not about seeing, but in being there (2000 (trans), p. 47). This became his determination of taste in photographs, the *studium*, punctuated by the key element of the photograph that grabs the viewer's immediate attention, the *punctum* (2000 (trans), pp. 26-27). No matter how they are described, these mental representations (Hall 1997, p. 17) are reinforced or modified through the captured photographic images of, and by, the Baby Boomers.

Whether or not the family snap has caught the decisive moment is not the critical issue. It is the differences and details that are in every photograph that will prompt an aspect of recall, and each person viewing the image will see that reproduced moment in time differently. What is certain in this emic perspective is that each person will evoke a meaning, a concept, and possibly a personal relationship with the image, whether complementary or dismissive.

In having the participants introduce their own photographic images to the discussion and research, they are able to use the picture as a prompt for their recall. This allows them to present aspects to their narratives that are not in the photograph, and recall their past that cannot be derived from memory alone. This is a recognised method of gathering data (Schwartz, D 1989, p. 122; Van House 2009, p. 1077). The influence of: 'inserting a photograph into a research interview' is discussed in some detail by Harper (2002, p. 13), where he argues that these images connect an individual to experiences or eras, even if the images do not reflect the subjects' actual lives. He describes four areas where the method of photo-elicitation has been concentrated: social organisation/social class; community; identity; and culture (Harper 2002, p. 16). Also he discusses how the use of photographs in interviews: 'sharpened the informants' memory and reduced the areas of misunderstanding' (Harper 2002, p. 14). In discussing her book *Family Secrets* (1995), Kuhn (2010, p. 304) points out that her private photographs allow her to disentangle the personal meanings behind her

images and consider the relationships with wider societal memory and understanding.

To add to the complexity of using photographs in research, it is not only what is shown in the reproduced image, but also what is not shown. While the image may clearly construct memory, it is also the hidden, missing, and other un-shown aspects that can be more descriptive, valuable, and interesting to elicit from the interviewee as oral history. The introduction of the photograph into the research process is not just about the representation of a place in time, it is about understanding the broader culture of the Baby Boomers and their relationship with photography, as well as its social implications.

Picturing the data

The research, or collected information, provides: 'detailed knowledge about our chosen scenes of social life' (Lindlof & Taylor 2011, p. 155). Each recorded interview is transcribed and I am able to compare the voice and the transcription to engage with the rich and detailed information on numerous occasions. Consequently, for this project I coded often throughout the data-gathering process. This allows ongoing review of the data, improving the coding progression and accordingly being able to discern any emerging themes. This coding of the personal narratives produced eighty-four areas of interest. Whilst this coding was extremely detailed, it did allow me to understand the breath of the subjects canvassed by the interview participants. Through further analysis and grouping of the codes I directed my interest, in the main, to five key themes of family history, memory and nostalgia, their collection of photographs, some aspects of technology and the future, the legacy of their oral history and family photographs. Subsequently, these themes form the foundations for further examination in the following chapters where I interpret and explain my understanding of what the participants reveal of their photographic collections and allied narratives (Woods, P 1999, p. 3).

Autoethnography of a Baby Boomer

Whether it was on hearing the participant's story for the first time in their home, later listening to the recorded interview, or interrogating the transcript, interviewees' stories repeatedly drew me to my own and often similar occurrences. Interview participant Sarah, continues to share story-telling moments with her grandmother (who is still alive) as I did with my grandmother, and stated:

> What I love is – I sit down and my grandmother who has a story that, for twenty minutes she'll talk about the one photograph and you sort of picture it and you create the story in your mind. You can see everything going on, whereas with photographs now you see it because it's there, but it doesn't allow your imagination to run wild. It doesn't allow you to sort of elaborate and create this fantastic story. You can just flip through the iPad and go: 'oh yeah, oh yeah'. So, I guess in a sense it's a little bit disappointing because [now] people don't talk about photographs.

Sarah is drawing on her memories of her grandmother's oral history to establish her own stories that she will eventually pass onto her children and grandchildren. It is through listening to Sarah's story and others from the research group that I find I cannot separate myself from this study.

As a consequence of this quite personal approach to the research, it became apparent that the interpretations and use of life-stories required a rational and methodically sound basis to frame this additional line of enquiry. I determined that as a member of the Baby Boomer group, my research could be further demonstrated, and enhanced through an autoethnographic self-narrative and viewing of my life through my cultural experiences (Reed-Danahay 1997, p. 9). An essential consideration in this qualitative research project is to understand autoethnography; is it a valid methodology, and can research be individualised and not be self-indulgent?

Explained by Lindlof and Taylor (2002, p. 289), autoethnography draws directly on my experiences and focuses on my life as a means of discovery, and to understand its worth in a social context. This provides

credence to the prospect of an autoethnographic inclusion where my family photography, and my stories, are used as the setting comprising history, memory and narrative. The concept 'self' in my research was one of the initial drivers in developing this thesis.

Thus on many levels I simultaneously investigated and could relate to the activities of those being researched (Wax & Wax 1980, p.30). Shimahara (1990, p. 86), describes this activity of participant observation as: 'an instrument of enquiry by playing dual roles – by being present in the situation, but by standing aside to observe it'. Consequently this offers another line of enquiry, that of the role of autoethnography in a personalised view of the Baby Boomer and family photography. Here the variances and similarities between seeing the 'other' through their photographs and stories, (Ellis 2002, p. 401) and being the *flâneur*, strolling through one's own pathways of history, memory and nostalgia, are considered. Expanding on Ellis's notion of the 'stories' there is a shift from the wider ranging collective perspective of the ethnographic research to that of the personalised performances of the autoethnographer. The process of autoethnography is interpretative and permits the researcher to select certain matters to examine (Chang 2008, p. 140).

In my case, it is a personalised narrative fashioned and corroborated through selected family photographs. Therefore, this expanded study researches and produces a detailed autoethnographic critique, using my family photographs to demonstrate how photography has influenced and recorded my life. It explores what I believe as influential about my own photography and the history I have recorded. The polysemic problem of methodology is addressed through an interchange of ethnographic and autoethnographic research together with family photography and narratives in this thesis.

Autoethnographic practice

According to Reed-Danahay (2002, p. 423), autoethnographic practice can occur both by a member (an insider) of the specific culture being observed, or the 'self-reflective voice' of the ethnographic writer who has become one with the text. On the other hand this experience has been described by Ellis (2009, pp. 12-14) as the reconstruction of aspects of the writer's life, which is linked through a structured framework. The social debates from the 1970s emerged with a strong, but controversial view that the self is always connected to the exploration, and should be used in the research and its analysis (Yow 1998, p. 58).

Since the mid-1970s, when the term autoethnography became more common, its use and interpretations have been debated, defined and discussed in some detail (Reed-Danahay 1997, p. 4). In reviewing discussions by Van Maanen (1995, p. 8-9), Reed-Danahay (1997, p. 2), Ellis and Bochner (2000), and Ellis (2009, p. 16), Table 1 provides a simple summary of their work. It highlights some key points that categorise autoethnography and the evolution of their ideas since the early nineteen-nineties into a more present-day practice in this century. Nevertheless, this is not intended to reflect a complete view of the developments in autoethnography. More recently, Douglas and Carless (2013), and Mingé (2013), have similarly addressed the considerable debates and inevitable evolution in this methodology.

In autoethnographic writing, the power of the photograph provides the pictorial or image, to support the various voices (Brettell 1997, p. 230). For instance, the photograph does not only provide a level of visual evidence, but also indicates various social and cultural experiences of the time. Harper (2000, p. 721) states that: 'photographs document several levels of social life'. So it is not just the rendition of an event or a few friends smiling at the camera, it can be the locality and climate, the fashion of the day, transport, use of technology, or perceived social status, or other indicators that provide the researcher with an insight to the wider social and cultural collective.

Table 1

Van Maanen 1995	***Reed-Danahay 1997***	***Ellis & Bochner 2000***	***Ellis 2009***
Ethnographic Realism	*Autoethnography*	*Self Narratives - Self Focus*	*Autoethnography - Approaches*
Confessional Ethnography A focus on field work	*Native Anthropology Authors of and studies of their own group*	*Reflexive Ethnographies Use of own experiences to look at self*	*Flexible*
Dramatic Ethnography Event narration	*Ethnic Autobiography Personal narratives of minority groups*	*Texts by complete-member researchers Exploration of groups which they are or have become members*	*Reflexive*
Critical Ethnography A cultural member's perspective	*Autobiographical Ethnography Personal experiences interwoven into ethnographic writing*	*Personal Narratives Aspects of daily life experiences*	*Reflective of life as lived*
Self-auto Ethnographies Textualisation of the writer's own group		*Literary Autoethnography Examination and interpretation of the self*	*Does not follow rigid rule-based procedures*

Earlier, I raised the issue of the autoethnographer being either an insider of the 'group', or being the reflective voice. In this thesis, I use both approaches. In the body of this work (Chapters Three to Five), my methodology is as a member of what I have framed as the Baby Boomer group. However, in Chapter Six I deliberately assume the role of the 'reflective voice'. Consequently, I am both one with the framed group, the insider, and have become the narrative voice of my own story.

A concise definition of autoethnography explains that personal stories and experiences of the writer can provide an entrée to cultural events, activities and private moments that would otherwise be lost (Lindlof & Taylor 2002, pp. 289-291; 2011, pp. 310-311). Similarly autoethnography is also described as a medium for story telling, which is closely linked to that of the self-narrative: 'but transcends mere narration of self to engage in cultural analysis and interpretation' (Chang 2008, p. 43). As a personal observation, Poulos (2013, p. 476) claims that autoethnography is a 'method of relating', it is inspirational and that it is a process of evocative and spirited writing. This autoethnographic methodology, as an aspect of

the qualitative research process, provokes memories and stories from my photographs. The research, however, is not restricted to photographs. The data is sourced from personal photographic collections, my own journals and diaries, interviews, letters, official documentation, recorded history, genealogical research, newspaper reports, and oral narratives of family yarns, myths and traditions. However the photograph remains the principal entrée to this research.

The reflexive 'I'

My camera has provided me with an interest, a structure to my life, a challenge, an income, and ingress to people and places that few experience. To understand my perspective on photography and how it has influenced me, a synopsis of my background is précised earlier in this chapter. My life is different from any of my research participants, yet there are similarities. We share a commonality in experiencing recent cultural history that has been recorded in our respective family photo-collections and we have experienced the political and cultural changes of the past six decades. However, writing an autoethnographic interpretation of my life through the influences of photography is a greater challenge than I first imagined. While as far back as I can remember cameras and photographs have been familiar objects, the influences photography has on my life are more complex than just memories or snapshots. Without question, many issues and decisions in my life have brought me to this place. Yet, together with my family, photography is one of the key factors in my growing history that remains a constant theme. Commencing with my middle/working class roots, the camera and photography continues as a valued influence on my life. However, I am mindful of the boundaries between self-analysis and reflection and a solipsistic[26] enquiry. My reflective storytelling in the following chapters shows the inter-relationship between the narratives of my research

26 *See p. 28, footnote* 10.

participants and how they prompt, link and engage with my own experiences (Berry & Patti 2015).

I empathise with Berger's statement that: 'the thrill found in a photograph comes from the onrush of memory' (1992, p. 192), because I also experience that buzz of excitement when I find another photograph from my past. Similarly, this is a familiar observation from my research participants. In investigating and writing this thesis, I collected anecdotes, was reminded of occasions, and of people and stories of my past, and remembered the stories of others. Spurred on by a discovered photograph, or a recalled event, I tracked down a number of childhood friends. In some cases, people from my past contacted me. In a way these meetings have either confirmed my recall of the past or challenged my belief of our shared past. Whether we met over a coffee or a glass of wine, chatted on the phone, or exchanged ramblings and messages via email or letters, our times together have been warm, friendly and full of new and revived stories. This production, or process of telling stories, is explained as: 'stories are the way humans make sense of their worlds' (Ellis 2004, p. 23). These stories may not be dramatic; they are often benign and banal. That can raise the underlying question of why record and save these/my stories? They are a slice of my history, my life, and the lives of those around me and told from my perspective (Payne 1996, pp. 49-51). Thus, they help to make sense of my world and, in a manner, the reason for my being. They are my legacy.

An autoethnographic montage

Even so, there can be another purpose for these objects. They are a resource that can be mined for the stories, information and 'rich data' they hold (Schwartz, D 1989, p. 122). Family photography provides a visual glimpse and a scopophilic view of a period in a family's or an individual's life. In addition to its visual impact, the photograph can prompt a collection of stories, but does not readily relinquish the narrative in order to allow the viewer to gain a greater understanding of the image. So

there is a need and ample opportunities for researchers, and I argue autoethnographers, to embrace the visual images as well as the written texts in the exploration and analysis of cultural studies (Pink 2009, p. 127).

Many social and cultural researchers seek a shared meaning in the evaluation and understanding of family photographs (Musello 1979; Schwartz, D 1989; Sekula 1982). It is granted, however, that in the autoethnographic writing of this research these photographs are a measure of my story – one Baby Boomer's life. Burgess argues: 'through [the] process of remediation, it transforms everyday *experience* [original italics] into shared public culture' (2006, p. 210). While Burgess is referring specifically to digital storytelling, I argue that the narrative is of critical importance and the media are primarily a means of communication. I claim that my life experiences inform the stories from my collection of photographs and that they can be a guide, or a snapshot, of a life in the latter half of the twentieth century in Australia. Importantly, these stories are fluid and will change the interpretation and understanding of the photographs as they are shared and discussed.

This fluidity with stories was reinforced following an email exchange between Darlene Cooper, a former primary school classmate, and myself in March 2011. Darlene wrote:

> So Grade 3, my god, I have trouble remembering what I did yesterday – but I do remember having measles or chicken pox and my mum, or teacher lifting up my dress in class – in front of other students heaven forbid – to discuss what sort of disease I had. And I remember that the classrooms were at the back of the school. I unfortunately don't have any Primary School photos.[27]

On seeing a digital copy of my worn and battered image of our Grade Three Class photo, it immediately reminded Darlene of one embarrassing moment in her school life (*photo 36*). Having shared that story with me (I had no memory of the incident), it is now part of my story when viewing this photograph. It is probable that you might now look at this much loved

27 *Original email (dated March 11, 2012) held in personal collection.*

image and speculate as to who amongst the young girls lined up in the photograph and suffered that unpleasant moment of having her skirt lifted. There is no single story, only interpretations that may or may not change over time, and between individuals.

These flowing versions with this and other events I suggest dovetail with the photographic montage. As Cook (1981, p. 172) discusses, the montage is not sequential, nor exists as a series of single images flicked through one after the other. Here I advocate that the montage, which is defined by Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p. 4) as the overlaying of a number of images to create a single new image, can also be extended to the one image with different meanings and interpretations. However, Sontag explains that photographs are: 'unpremeditated slices of the world … and … clouds of fantasy and pellets of information' (1977, p. 69). I draw on these clouds and pellets that are captured within the photographs and the process in which they teasingly provoke multiple stories and, therefore, many readings of the same image. By this I mean that there is a kaleidoscope of complex and constantly changing stories, memories, interpretations and values placed on the multi-duplicated single photograph. I argue that the simultaneous thoughts and memories engendered by the photograph, now become the polysemous montage of the autoethnographic writer. Consequently, such framing of the photo-narrative is the premise for my autoethnographic story.

Photo-elicitation and orality

This autoethnographic study draws on stories, both oral and written, to complement the richness of the narrative. In most other studies the (family) photograph has been used to stimulate memory, or as a supportive document (Freund & Thomson 2011, pp. 2-3). Conversely, in this research the photograph is the motivational element with the interviewees and plays the primary role in my story as well. Using photographs to confirm facts, kindle and construct memory, or for prompting moments to explore life-stories, family histories, or oral and

social histories is not new. Often specific photographs are used as a photo-elicitation component in interviews (Van House 2009, p. 1077).

The majority of the photo-narrative and photo-elicitation research has been confined to being a small segment of the broad research agenda in the social and cultural sciences. This argument is a critical tenet in the publication *Oral history and photography* (Freund & Thomson 2011, p. 2):

> Oral historians find little guidance in their literature on the use of photographs in oral history. All of the major English-language oral history guides and handbooks mention photographs only in passing.

Yet the use of photographs in the social sciences has been debated for some decades. More than twenty-five years ago, Curry (1986, p. 204) states that the: 'photo-elicitation interview is not a typical research method'. Then more recently Harper (2002, p. 13) suggests:

> That its [the use of photographs in research] potential usefulness is huge and now largely unrecognized.

Harper has been amongst those who, in their broader writings, argue for and advocate the value of photo-elicitation in social research. Despite some reticence, there is a shift towards a greater use of personal photographs to draw out the stories from interviewees. Twine (2006, p. 491), for example, relies heavily on archived family photographs for her photo-elicitation interviews and states:

> I employed photographs as a research tool for producing visual records and collecting data about the material world in which people live.

Similarly Prosser (2007), recognises that photographs and their stories are a valuable resource for researchers. While using the broader concept of visual culture he also argues that visual research has evolved and has: 'contributed to a robustness and complexity in visual studies'. Van House (2009), in her series of interviews on story telling and the self, includes aspects of photo-elicitation. Woodley-Baker (2009) also discusses the significance of the photo-narrative when it is linked to the lived experience and the supportive process of photo-elicitation. Although her study is

specifically about young women in education, Woodley-Baker (2009, p. 25) argues that the use of photographs in research is:

> A powerful methodological tool in the exploration and representation of identity, subjectivity and the story of self.

These arguments are also relevant in the broader uses of photo-narrative and photo-elicitation.

In this thesis I am using photographs both as an object of study and a resource for research. Pink (2009, p. 127) questions why ethnographic research relies heavily on the written accounts of people's lives, when the visual is so widely used in everyday life. In supporting her argument, Pink draws on the work of Lister and Wells, (2009, p. 128) who argue that:

> It is seldom, if ever, possible to separate the cultures of everyday life from practices of representation, visual or otherwise.

Accordingly, the basis of my research is grounded in the visual – family photography with the supporting stories. Similar to that of Duncan (2004, p. 8), I am the primary source for these autoethnographic memories and information. However, where appropriate I use other resources to provide further authenticity and another voice to the narratives. This approach is supported by Mingé (2013, p. 435), who reasons that:

> The photographs … are not meant to substitute for written experiences but rather to add layers to your experience of the family stories.

Increasingly personal photographs, whether single images or larger collections, are being used in autobiographies. The changing manner of using photographs in autoethnography is, I suggest, only slowly evolving. In the *Handbook of autoethnography* (Holman-Jones, S, Adams, TE & Ellis, C 2013), one third of the contributing authors refer to photographs and photography in relation to this methodology. Most use photography in the broader social and cultural contexts, for example (Bartleet 2013, p. 445), while others are more prudent in their discussions. Only

Shoemaker (2013, p. 527), makes any specific reference to family photography when, in commenting on his field work states:

> [I was] digging through boxed up artifacts such as … family photographs … conducting formal and informal oral history interviews.

The growing practice of oral historians' foray into the private lives of individuals and families, or the recounting of events around the kitchen table by family groups (Banks 2001; Freund & Thomson 2011; Johnson, R et al. 2004; Spence, J & Holland 1991) are testament to this. Combining family photography and autoethnography is one of a number of approaches to oral history and other means of recoding life-stories. Yet, it appears that there are fewer studies where the photograph has been the focus of this form of research. To some extent this is reinforced recently in the edited publication, *The Oxford handbook of oral history* (Ritchie (2011). Only three authors (of forty contributors) mention photographs. In discussing the video recording of oral history, Williams (2011) alludes to photographs in passing more to 'capture' the artefact on camera and not for its historic or cultural value. Similarly Lichtblau (2011, p. 278) considers the audio-visual aspects of oral history and mentions how photographs and other objects can stimulate memories, but for oral historians: 'they were hardly [the] prime consideration'. Then Boyd (2011, p. 295), in his review of the digital revolution and its impact on oral history, comments briefly on the presentation of digital photograph online. None of these authors discuss or analyse in-depth the importance and value of the photograph in family and oral histories. This, I argue, is a significant gap in the growing importance and popularity of oral histories.

Photographic autoethnography: an evolved methodology

This segment of my research employs a self-interviewing model of enquiry, examining and analysing aspects of my life through my personal collection of photographs. Sampson-Cordle (2001, p. 28) identifies a method she calls 'photo-feedback', which uses the self-reflexivity of her subjects and inserting photographs into an interview as a means of

understanding and analysis. Harper concurs with this use of the personal photograph, and argues that photo-elicitation need not necessarily be reliant on the more widely accepted documentary and art based photographic genres. There is a broader methodology using artefacts in arts-based research that is defined as visual autoethnography (Smith-Shank & Keifer-Boyd 2007, p. 1). Similarly Pink refers to visual ethnography in drawing on the study of photographic cultures and using photographic images in ethnographic research (2012, p. 65). In contrast however, she subsequently suggests that photo-elicitation, where a photograph is inserted in to the research, is awkward as it is intended to draw out a response from the participant (2012, p. 82-84). This I argue is similar to that of the photo-feedback model, and in a manner no different than asking a probing question in an interview – a response is expected. It mirrors the theoretical components of the typical communications loop of offering communications through some means of text. In this case the text is a photograph. To close the communications process, feedback is required. Miller (2006, p. 12) refers to this as the 'feedback loop' and that: 'communication is about the creation of meaning systems in families and cultures' and the feedback from the photograph provides this meaning. Further to Sampson-Cordle's research (2001), Harper (2002, p. 17) also supports the use of an individual's photographs, but not only as a meaningful record. He argues that photographs can similarly be treated, or given deeper meaning, through a combination of: 'self-interviewing and conventional elicitation methods'.

The research by Sampson-Cordle (2001) is theme-based, using participants' photographs during interviews to obtain an insight to their understanding and thinking. While not specifically theme-based, my research uses an allied approach when working with the Baby Boomer interviewees. However, for an autoethnographic study I expand the technique from the reactive stories by the interviewees to a proactive emphasis. Here the selection of the family photographs drives the affiliation, and it is the participants who tell their story not inveigled by a researcher. I define this original concept as 'photographic

autoethnography'. My underlying argument is that the family collections of photographs held by Baby Boomers are a significant social and cultural heritage. As such, they become a driving influence for autoethnographic research. Two of the core aspects of the research (personal photography and autoethnography) coalesce and continue to evolve as the narratives are told and re-told.

The ethical self

There is a conflicting argument that suggests that there should be a differentiation or separation between the 'ethnographer's reflective self', and where the researcher becomes the focus of the research and replaces the research topic (Delamont 2009, p. 60). I argue that this 'photographic autoethnographical' aspect of my research is an adjunct to the comprehensive qualitative and ethnographic work discussed earlier. According to Delamont, (2009, pp. 60-61) and Tolich, (2010) there are ethical challenges for the autoethnographic researcher. Specifically they discuss that the autoethnographic researcher should demonstrate a strong influence of ethical probity and the premise of informed consent (when involving others in my story). Irrespective of the methodology adapted, the underlying consideration for the researcher is to act with high ethical standards.

The framework to present this aspect of the dissertation in an academic form has challenged me. Furthermore, listening to others talk of their circumstances gave me cause to look at my own experiences in a new way. Also, similar to Ellis (2009, pp. 63-66), I am questioning how to explain and interpret the rich findings from the fieldwork and my own narrative. Accordingly, by contradicting Delamont's (2009, p. 59) premise that: 'studying ourselves [the familiar] can never make anything anthropologically strange,' I will demonstrate through this autoethnographic odyssey, that my life has been made different or strange, because of photography and my autoethnological study.

Delamont draws a singularly fine line on her determination of autoethnography. She is critical of Ellis and Bochner [amongst others] and their significant influence on the evolution of ethnographic research. Continuing, Delamont (2009, p. 58) argues that her fieldwork was somewhat compromised because she became embroiled in political intrigue and claims:

> That autoethnographic self-obsession, … [is] a greedy institution, intruding too much into my personal life, have no analytic mileage, and tell the readers nothing about fieldwork, or capoeira [the cultural dance she was researching] or embodiment or habitus or anything of social scientific, pedagogic or educational interest.

This is a harsh call, to damn an established method of research because of only a small nucleus of significant researchers in the field[28], and Delamont's own personal crises about her fieldwork.

My photographs accomplish more than just record events – photography is fundamental in my life. These images show a transition from child to teenager and then to an adult, husband and father. This could possibly be said for many other Baby Boomer collections of images. Yet, for me, my photographs show evidence of a different life where the camera has underpinned career changes, and egress to unique opportunities, both professionally and socially. Without doubt, there are memories and stories of others that may mesh or rub with my narratives. Similarly the complexities of life cannot be rendered in a single, or even a series of photographs. These snapshots portray aspects of social documentation, but it is the supportive narratives describing the personal events, the scandals, legal issues, divorces and other emotive events that comprise peoples' personal lives, which provide the detailed autoethnographic story (Holland 2004, pp. 154-155).

My understanding and interpretations of these events may differ slightly or substantially from their opinion. In addition, there are shared instances where the rendition of my facts could bring embarrassment, fear of

28 *See Table 1 earlier in this chapter.*

discovery, or other forms of mental or physical anguish to an individual or family.

Throughout the research for this thesis I often found myself returning to my collection of photographs. At times the narrative of a particular interviewee prompted this engagement, or on other occasions it was a personal journey or re-enactment, stimulated by a photograph. One small black-and-white photograph helped recall an afternoon on the beach in 1965. It was little different to many other similar social times I shared with a group of friends as a teenager. However, this event is recorded through one photograph. The picture is of a former schoolgirl friend (who I will call Heather), then as a teenager, in her modest bikini bathers at Brighton beach[29]. The day at the beach was unremarkable and even with the picture, my memory of it is vague. However, the story of interest I remember and I can narrate is set some seven years later. Heather had her first marriage annulled because of her husband's strange sexual fetish. I find her story moving, with great poignancy. It is about lost love, and a reflection of strong religious doctrine and the social stigma attached to divorce forty years ago (Seabrook 1991, p. 173). Yet to the now mother and grandmother it is still embarrassing[30] and shameful. I have not approached Heather for consent to 'name' her.

I was reminded of this event whilst interviewing one of my research participants. My former profession as a police officer was raised in the discussion. There was an abrupt silence. I immediately realised that a line had been crossed. Through some strong reassurances and careful questioning I elicited that the interviewee's nephew, a former member of the South Australian Police Service, had been involved in a major scandal[31]. Their nephew had no involvement in the incident, but was

29 *Brighton beach is a popular Adelaide attraction for swimming, some surfing, diving, its jetty and family gatherings.*
30 *Other examples of embarrassing events are discussed in Chapters Three, Five and Six.*
31 *This event was headlined in the Adelaide media as the 'Duncan Affair'. In May 1972, Dr George Duncan, a university lecturer, drowned in the River Torrens (Adelaide). It was alleged that three members of the [then] police vice-squad were involved in the drowning, although this has never led to criminal convictions.*

drawn into its web of intrigue through a culture of solidarity and never 'dobbing-in'[32] your mates.

These two events have no connection, but one triggered my buried memory of the other, because of a single photograph that I had found discarded in a box with other yellowed papers and photographs from almost fifty years ago. Both 'scandalous' incidents occurred in 1972. Yet they indicate the hidden fears and tragedies that stalk families. Most will not be as impactful or as dramatic as these two occasions; nonetheless, that does not diminish the strong feelings and complex relationships that entwine people's lives.

While I do not have photographs of the circumstances where friends have been killed in accidents, committed suicide or faced other personal or cultural dramas, I know of these events. In many cases, I still have photographs of the individuals involved. These catastrophic events are complex, and cannot fully be and, I suggest, should not be rendered through my photographs and interpretation of their lives. The names, and in this research the images, would become a surrogate for the individuals and: 'demonstrate the inability of the photograph to conjure up the dead' (Sturken 1999, p. 189). I argue the importance of my relationship and subsequent stories with these individuals is made powerful through our shared interactions over time, and not from death, or a social or cultural impasse. Thus ethical probity is imperative.

Personal ethics play a significant function in the use of my own photographs and the narratives they evoke throughout this thesis. Often I become the individual researched, and I not only supply the photographs, but also play a pivotal role in the telling of the stories and developing the oral history of the family, specifically based on those photographs. The advantage in applying this method is that it cultivates the participant's own narrative and interpretation of what is significant through their voice and not that of the researcher. This is the manner in which we create

32 *Dobbing-in is an Australian colloquial term meaning to inform on someone or somebody.*

value in our respective lives (Thomson 2011c, p. 89). Over time the value and the impact of the family photographic collection can change, not because the photographs have changed, but because the interpretation and understanding of the narratives around the photograph(s) have provided further dimensions to the image.

Technology as a support

Today, technology confronts, challenges, enhances, and offers opportunities for innovation in all forms of research. This social and cultural effect of technology also holds true for those involved in the application of qualitative research (Wiles, Crow & Pain 2011, pp. 593-594). While the impact of this techno-evolution on photography, either through the emergence of digital imaging or storage and retrieval systems, will be discussed in another section of this project, the broader application of technology continues to have an effect on research practices. We are, in the twenty-first century, computer-centric and need to comprehend the role of the computer and reflexivity in qualitative research (Woods, M, Macklin & Lewis 2015, pp. 2-3).

Even employing the most appropriate technology the researcher must continue to immerse themself into the data to obtain an understanding of what is there. It is incumbent on me to: 'decide how and under what circumstances this technology will be employed in [the] research project' (Hesse-Biber & Dupuis 2000, p. 326). Consequently, as the researcher I realise that I have to be close to my data and have a 'feel' for it. According to Lindlof and Taylor (2011, pp. 265-266): 'scholars … should remain vigilant about how information technology affects our sensitivity to voice, touch, emotion, gesture, and all manner of sensuous detail'.

Conclusion

This review of the research methodology reveals that the intent for this project while unchanged, the means of getting there has altered. I have argued for and supported the validation of the transition between ethnographic and autoethnographic research in this thesis. These are legitimate methodologies, accepted for more than four decades as a research-based, story-telling medium and become key aspects of 'onioning' this research. As to the analytical depth of autoethnographic research, this has been subject to rigorous academic argument. Family photographic artefacts can support the personal narrative, oral history and life-story. While their use in autoethnography has not been extensive, especially in Australia, there are variances in the manner of introducing photographs to the research activity. While 'photo-elicitation' and 'photo-feedback' are important methodological approaches, my inclusion of family photography is different. Using my original notion of 'photographic autoethnography', the photographs in the autoethnographic account move from adjunct elicitation to being the primary driver of the narrative. Applying the rings of research concept to the narratives that are combined with family photographs support the argument of photographic autoethnography as an evolving methodology.

Researchers in cultural studies, anthropology and sociology tend to use photographs taken by the researcher, utilise a small number provided by the interviewee, or use 'professional' photographs of the group or sub-culture being researched. This focus on reading the photographic texts aids those researchers in determining their interpretation of the group under study. While power and control are ever-present aspects of family photography, it is the cultural and historical values that add to the meaningful narratives and legacy emanating from these personal photographic collections.

Secrets are often part of a family's history. There are whispers, subtle comments in passing, or structured avoidance of issues considered taboo. According to some in my family those memories are best forgotten. On Boxing Day 1857 my great-grandparents arrived from Cornwall, by sailing clipper, to disembark in the Colony of South Australia. They were accompanied by their infant daughter of six months and had been married ten months.[33] *Here the opportunity for a new start in a new nation was predicated by an early pregnancy. This part of the family history is never mentioned in the polite company of our family. The keepers of secrets wield power.*

This chapter is the first of three chapters where I engage with the data from the research participants. In this chapter, I explore if and how Baby Boomers use their domestic photography as a means of remembering and recording their history, developing their narratives and creating the family memories of their lives. Interrogation of the research shows that the photographs induce memory-making and whether through inheriting or claiming small assortments of photographs from their parents and grandparents, Baby Boomers are now able to add these to their own substantial collection of images. Additionally, this accumulated anthology adds to the family history and opens up opportunities for exploring social and cultural understanding. These opportunities are further enhanced if the collection is subsequently bequeathed as a legacy to the next generation and discussed in chapter five.

The following discussions further expound the relationship between amateur photography, the family snap, genealogy, memory (photo-induced recall), and the family oral history. This approach is fostered through three considerations and centred on family photographs and associated stories (Van Maanen 1995, p. 23). Firstly, from the research group I draw on their interviews and show how they use their photographs to develop a sense of belonging, create memories and foreshadow the discussion on photographic legacy. Then, as the ensuing discourse shows, I am constantly drawn into their narratives and how they resonate with my memories and experiences. This is examined through an initial autoethnographic treatment. Finally I illustrate how one photograph can

33 *This data is based on genealogical research from parish records, birth and death certificates, the (sailing ship) Caucasian's passenger manifest and the Log of Logs (Gergen, KJ & Gergen, MM 1983, Narratives of the self).*

reveal secrets and open up what was once an embarrassing and a particularly private period in one family. Supported by this research I show that there is more than an intrinsic value in the snapshot and that its worth is not static or diminishing, but it has the potential to grow, and take on a symbolic significance over time, especially in the digital age.

Before the shoebox is opened

Whether formal participants in this research group or not, there is a belief that family photographs have some value for future generations (Gibson 2008, pp. 100-101). The research shows that there is more to be discovered than just viewing a few photographs and listening to anecdotes about individual snapshots. I observe how people display and treasure what they consider their distinctive or unique photographs. Supporting that willingness to share, they unlock their albums and shoeboxes of pictures, and talk openly about their personal collections. One particular story, from Marc and Carol, is based on a single photograph. It is a thought-provoking account of family values and reflects some of the key attributes of Baby Boomers' photo-collections: memory, nostalgia, family genealogy, secrets, and the inherent value of that special photograph. This single photograph and its continuing story underpins this chapter. I argue that a detailed reading of one text, in this case family photographs, yields rich data and concepts for analysis that are possible to apply to other photographs of a similar period.

Photographs are not the only domestic objects that prompt, and in a manner embrace, family history and memories. However, images are significant in this aspect (Wilton 2011, pp. 68-75). Over time these photographs evolve as a presumed repository of memories, but become the stimuli for the narratives, oral histories and re-remembering. The collection becomes a 'site of memory' (Thomson 2011b, p. 257). In particular, during the time of the Baby Boomers, family photographs, their production and display has reached unprecedented heights in terms of numbers taken and the range of their physical and social distribution. From the early 1950s the family photograph, through technological

advances and mass production of cameras, became far more accessible to a growing number of people (Gustavson 2009; na 2015).

Interviewee Pauline, like many of the other research participants, has an extensive collection of family photographs kept in albums, slide containers, shoeboxes and on display throughout the family home. In a wistful moment during our interview she lamented that her husband Peter, does not show much interest in their family photographs:

> Like I said, he's not interested in the photos. He sees them as all that money lying in the drawer and that I never look at them. That's his common saying to everybody.



Photo 1 *Pauline values the family collection of photo albums, although Peter sees them as a waste of money. This is similar to collections held in many Baby Boomers' homes.*

Nevertheless, even the most bland Australian backyard snapshot depicts a time in history.[34] They show a way of life, and provide the viewer with a glimpse of an era and place that with each viewing is being renewed. This is similar to the assertion by Thomson (2011b, pp. 274-275), where he explains that photographs offer two differing yet interconnected forms of historical evidence, that of the artefacts, or objects in the photograph and also their subjectivity through the telling of stories and other means of making sense of them. Peter, (Pauline's husband) with his discouraging comments on the family photographs

34 *See photo 22 and the accompanying discussions with Jillian Crider in Chapter Five. This photograph shows her as a teenager, wrapped in a dressing gown hugging her prized puppies. In the background is an old chicken coop and further back the top of a 'Hills Hoist' clothes line can be seen.*

has not realised their potential importance to their children and grandchildren (photo 1).

The detailed and informative stories that flowed from the interviews were partial 'life-stories' where there was: 'a narration of select aspects of a person's internalized and evolving life story' (McAdams 2006, p. 93). Not everything in people's lives can be explained using family photographs. However, the theme and thrust of these discussions are always based on the premise of the photograph(s). The most recurring points of the narratives by the participants, are their family history and genealogical attestation, the recording of celebrations, traditions, rites of passage, and associated memories. Broad general history, and links with the historical past feature strongly in the interviews as well. These stories include the ordinary things in a family – family milestones and celebrations, particular interests and hobbies, children's achievements, holidays, and often times shared with friends.

This shows an assumption that family photographs only capture those happy and proper moments. Marianne Hirsch (1997, pp. 73-74) refers to the false images of happiness, McAdams (1993a, p. 265) discusses the family myth and meaning, and that happiness does not always transpire, while Val Williams (1991, p. 186) calls snapshot photography (this is her interpretation of family photography) as naive. While I discuss the Baby Boomers' 'happy snaps' elsewhere in this thesis, I concur that the family collections seem to represent an 'ideal family life', even though it is not necessarily attained. The discussions introduced from these 'happy snaps' – those sentimental aspects of memory, which often provide a greater intimacy than general memories – are likewise raised. The concept of sentiment in families and photographs is complex and becomes key to memory (Musello 1979, p. 112). Not every family collection of images holds captive that one gripping narrative. Nevertheless each photograph has its own tale and some of the more interesting aspects raised by the participants are explored.

Preserving a past for a future

It is suggested that family photography should be redefined under the formality of documentary recording and not as a casual rendition of a few pictures (Williams, V 1991, pp. 186, 197). Family albums assembled over the past sixty years by Baby Boomers are more than a collection of images; they are a private museum and detail the history of their families, thus spanning time and generations. Interviewee Julie is one example of those participants who consider the documentation of their photographs as important. However, she suggests that while this documentation is important it is not primary in her thoughts:

> Yes, it seems to me not to be something that's first and foremost in our thoughts, it's something that comes as a result of something else, and the photographs become then, a document that confirms, or whatever, information.

Julie, who is in her mid-fifties, shows a clear understanding that what she is preserving is the future of her family through the photographs and narratives of her past. She stated:

> Well in a way, some of my photographs are duty; they are based on the idea that I have to record this moment in time. Some of my photographs are of my son, because I think that he needs to know his early time. Like my mother did for me, I do for him, and there are photographs that he'll take with him to his future and family.

Her desire to preserve her cultural history is not a chore, but a duty of accord and love built through family traditions. While this cultural history and identity is under constant change, it becomes what forms our understanding of ourselves (Batchen 2001, pp. 78-80; Hall 1990, p. 225). Underpinning the premise of preservation, Patricia Holland (1991, p. 1) in her introduction to *Family snaps* opens by stating: 'making and preserving a family snapshot is an act of faith in the future'. The snapshots taken or collected by Baby Boomers are going to be gazed upon by family members and other invited viewers over years and decades. While the image may have some inherent value through depicting a grandparent, uncle, aunt, friend, or other associated people and places, their worth is only partly realised. Furthermore people seek their sense of identity

often through the family group, and my argument is that photographs help develop this belonging.

Nevertheless, through the pages of the albums, or however the images are held, aspects of the lives, loves, happy and not so happy moments of these families are captured, recorded and stored. Scenes, which have been shot, are not just bland events that in time become to be seen as inconsequential images. They are the vessel for prompting memories, building histories, recording disputes, and triggers for greater recollections. Memories are important, as expressed in 1990 by Stocking, cited in (Pershkin 1997, p. 8):

> It is hard to live our lives in places where we have no memories. It limits the depth of our relationships – not just to people, but to places, to seasons.

Furthermore, I agree with Williams (1991) and assert that family photographic records, and all they entail, are valid and formal collections. Images of the past give meaning to the present and our personal photographs offer (to the individual) a future comfort. This 'conscious legacy building' and nostalgic comfort form aspects of lifelong memories (Otis-Green 2003).

A regular topic emerging from the interviews is the participants discussing their lack of history and connection with place if the family moved residences, or to a different town or city. Wendy stated that she was often quite upset when her family moved. She felt alienated from the world around her and even in her home there was nothing, including family photographs, of the new environment that gave her comfort in where she was living:

> The thing that struck me the most and the thing that I found really difficult was there were no pictures on the walls, and for me it's a bit like an emotional vacuum if I go into a place where that's the case.

Throughout his early life, interviewee Paul moved residences often. Sometimes it was from place to place with his father as he looked for work and occasionally when he lived with his mother. As Paul reminisced, he acknowledged that more often than not he was 'farmed out' to his extended family because of his parents' separation. With each of those shifts to a new household or place, it was different:

> Every place I went was new; I had no history and now very few photographs to even remember those places; they are just hazy memories with the odd glimmer. 'Oh I remember that' and the like.

Hearing these stories I was lured to the bruising similarities between the experiences of those interviewed and my own narrative. Like many of those I interviewed one recurring impact on embracing new places was a lack of history, a sense of not quite belonging. My sentiments were not a denial of the broader social and historical data of my 'new home' that I could read about, but it was my personal history and connection with 'place'. While my shifting of place was not as a child, but by choice as an adult, the lack of a shared past was profound. I had no personal knowledge of how a street or community may have appeared when I was a teenager, or even two years in the past. Consequently my photographs of the people I met in these towns and cities have no history prior to my arrival, just a present and a future. Stocking's (1990) thinking is correct and it is my personal discontent.

Yet, in our memory, there is a period before an image is recorded and an expanding time after it is taken, both of which become part of its history. Ross, an interviewee who was born in the early 1950s, commented:

> I think you probably use photos more than what you think when you start talking about it. You don't really appreciate or realise they do have a fairly important part in your life, although you tend to take a lot of it for granted when you start reflecting back, how we use them a lot.

What he was realising is how a photographic image is fixed in a place and a time. Ross had very few photos of his parents and family from his early years and he places significant value on the few images he has found, for himself and his son. However his wife, Ruth, took quite the opposite view:

> I guess I took it for granted, comparing with Ross, because he's got nothing, whereas I've got access to a significant family photo collection from my parents, but you don't [here Ruth indicated her husband, Ross].

For another interviewee, Ted, there are aspects of his past that he is unlikely to ever discover. As a child he was fostered out to far-flung family members. This makes what Ted has managed to find even more important to him: 'I'm writing out my memoirs and I'm adding the photos now, as I go, and I've got to work out

a way of preserving that'. He is relying on oral stories of others and his fragmented memory to construct his past. Ted acknowledges that the few photographs that he has been able to uncover act as prompts and a stimulus to his memory. Here he shows the prudent balance of control, power and authenticity, as he decides how to use the few photographs that are available and what stories he will tell.

Throughout his interview, Ted quietly, but frequently, reaffirmed his desire to record his past as best he can. In doing so Ted is making and re-making his memories and his intent is to leave this chronicle as a legacy for his children and grandchildren. He described it as:

> I was in my 40s, well, I was in my late 50s before I seen any of these photos, but I was in my 40s before I met my mother. I picked up with just a few photos, but they really didn't tell me anything that I didn't already know. They were photos of me sitting around my grandmother's house, and evidently she [Ted's mother] must have taken them in the first year and a half, when she used to stay with my grandma.
>
> I kept a relationship going with my grandmother until she died, and that was in her 90s and in the old house and the grapevines growing out the back in the trellises and me sitting in front of them in different poses, and the old prams, and things like that.
>
> So they were things I knew about anyway, but, it was good to see the photographs of them. I want my kids and their kids to know my history.

It is often a common statement that after the family and pets, the photographs are the next things worth saving if the house was burning. Australian sociologist, Margaret Gibson (2008, p. 81) discusses the hold that photographs seem to have over people and that: 'we fear their loss or destruction'. Following an article by Adelaide journalist Amber Petty (2014), who wrote of the devastation that a house fire can cause, we exchanged a series of emails and spoke over the telephone. Amber discussed her personal reflection of her grandparents' home razed when her Baby Boomer father was a young boy. She stated:

> Every single photo that had ever been taken of him and the rest of the family was destroyed right there and then … part of my dad's childhood story went up in flames.

Her story continues and Petty (2014) laments that she has no images of her father, or grandparents from that era. Accepting that her father as a young boy would not have considered the future impact of the loss of his childhood photographs, she now does feel this deprivation of their shared past. However, recently a single photograph of her father, as a toddler sitting on a bench, was found.

This discovery for Amber was healing and she wrote of it as:

> It stirred something in me, and maybe that would have happened years ago if that fire hadn't deleted my dad's visual story. I could see that once upon a time he too was little. This single photo generated huge empathy towards him and was unbelievably healing.

This example highlights the engagement people have with their family photo-collections or with a single photograph, and how they remember or construct memories. Petty is not the only person I found amongst the research participants who commented on the impact of fire and the destruction of family photographs[35]. Besides the physical loss of these images, it is the ongoing forfeiture of memories and legacy that becomes evident.

> Someone I work with, their house was burnt down, so she always makes sure there's photos distributed in lots of places, because they lost everything. So, when you've always got it, you don't appreciate it until you don't have it, or you lose it. (Interviewee Ruth)

> But there's a big sort of elm chest out there, there's that, and there's another box under the table in the front. They're all down here in case of fire [this family live in a two-story home], so that it can be whizzed out, if necessary, out of the front door. (Interviewee Carol)

As outlined in the previous chapter, Baby Boomers in Australia and many other countries are the first generation to be involved in a widespread and substantive collection of family photographs. This is significantly different to that of their parents and grandparents who may have had only a single, or a small number of, photographs in their possession. Prior to the Baby Boomer generation, family photographic collections were fragmented and the family photo album was small, if it existed at all. As the Baby Boomers have aged and come into

35 *Also I had a career as a professional firefighter for almost fourteen years and attended numerous house fires, see Chapter Two, A focus on methodology – A participant's autoethnography. In almost every case, after the safety of family and pets, the loss of the family photographs was the notable trauma experienced by those suffering the fire.*

possession of the earlier family photographic holdings, they have taken on the role of custodian of this growing photographic and genealogical anthology.

While there is an acknowledgement that the photo collection is important and corroborates memories, Janet lamented:

> When there's a fire and people will say, oh but it's the memories, it's the photos that I would miss most of all. I wouldn't go for the box of photos, and yet, if you begged and pleaded for them to go somewhere, I'd fight you for them. But those memories are there, whether the photos are there or not. It's the photos validate those memories I guess, but I don't, I wouldn't come screaming in for the photos.

The melancholy that hovers over those who have lost photographs is an act of grieving (Conrad 2003, p. 32). Whether this desire to rescue photographs from a disaster is an urban myth or not, there is significant importance placed on the preservation of the family snapshots for their value in making memories and their legacy. Holland (1991, p. 7) suggests that family pictures are part of a 'romantic social fantasy'. For each person who rummages through a collection of photographs, or carefully turns the pages in an old family photo album, they interpret the images. Their own stories evolve, or are recalled. It is a pleasurable experience where the recreated stories become a new and binding memory (Schacter 2007, p. 94). The narratives are passed from generation to generation and, without further proof, corroborate the ongoing value of the family photograph.

Sense of (not) belonging

The value placed on the family photographic collections often became a point of discussion in the interviews. As Sue commented: 'you take it for granted, but I suppose if you consider it [the family collection], then it's fairly important'. Also, the absence of expected pictures becomes frustratingly significant. In his early life participant Paul had limited contact with his parents. They divorced and he was passed between family members to be cared for. He had no roots and lived in various family enclaves in South Australia, the Northern Territory and Victoria. Now, Paul expresses this as one of the regrets in his life because: 'I've got no photographs of, not any photographs of mum and dad in the early days'.

In latter years there have been some ‘dreary’, pictures of Paul’s parents found by other relatives: ‘I just wish that there had been more’. The issue raised by Paul is that there was an expectation that there would be photographs for him to look at. Then he would be able to create his personal family fantasy. Paul is seeking out his spots of time, but his intimacy, or special moments shared with his parents are lost. He has no memory of any such cherished moments and there are no photographs to offer him a memory either. He claimed that: ‘I didn’t belong’. While others are turning to their collection of family photographs to support the oral history of their life, Paul cannot. This saddens him. These are photo gaps in people’s lives and the narrative is weakened by this disparity.

In a different longing to find the valued but ordinary photographs, interviewee Janet, in discussions with her mother and searching through the old family home, has not discovered any significant cache of photographs. Even after enquiring she is unsure of her memory. She questions if they were never taken and her memory of being photographed as a child is her dream. She questions: ‘[Maybe] they have been destroyed, lost, or if someone else in the family has them?’ Even so, Janet continues her search, as finding these ‘missing’ photographs is important to her as they may bridge the gap and her perception of not belonging to the family.

At times family squabbles have been punctuated by the destruction of photographs. Family tension was a constant issue for Ted as a young boy. His stepmother destroyed most of his ‘history’ whilst preserving that of her own children: ‘she didn’t see me and mine as being important … whereas her children’s photos were still there, mine had disappeared, it was as if I didn’t belong’. In Mervin’s situation it was his marriage break-up that resulted in the loss of some prized family photographs. On separation, his former wife took most of the photo albums with her. However, in a subsequent relationship, her new partner obliterated many of them: ‘most of the photographs got destroyed by this fuckin’ cunt’. His anger is still raw, years later. Whether this is from the divorce, the loss of photographs, or a combination of each I did not probe further. However, Mervin stated he now wishes to show the comparison between his children when young and his grandchildren at the same age. Not

being able to demonstrate that comparison also angers him – he feels this loss and he grasps at trying to make his children belong to his life and experiences.

The photograph has become a significant part of memory making for the Baby Boomer. It is interesting to note that the Baby Boomer is perhaps the first generation to lament the missing photograph. Often the family photograph is a prized possession; however the reasons for this are varied. From the middle of the twentieth century the relationship between the family and photographs became substantially different. Many Baby Boomers inherit, or claim photographs held by parents or other pre-boomers. Subsequently Baby Boomers use images to build and construct their memories and that of the family dynasty. A study by Katriel on museums argues that photographs 'serve as a powerful memory-building strategy' (1994, p. 16). Similarly, the collection of family photographs from the pre-Boomer years has also become integral to the Boomers' memory-building. So, these often small and older assortments of family photographs are melded with the more extensive photo-collections created by the Baby Boomer and become an adjunct to their memories. While not a formal museum, family photo-collections are an important social and cultural holding and become the photographic autoethnography of the owner.

There are times prominent 'subjects' are photographed, but the vast majority of Baby Boomer photographs are routine. The snapping of scenes and saving of the family photos could be reasoned as being nothing particularly remarkable. These are the images, which Barthes (2000 (trans)) calls his *studium*. Arguably these photographs have only recorded a spot in time, further imprisoning the ordinary lives of regular people. Nevertheless they are, in reality: 'a private and incidental record of frozen moments' (Gordon 1978, p. 8), and far from commonplace. These ordinary lives, reflected through their photographs, are full of rich material that should not be lost (Tanner, Kasinger & Richardson 2009, p. 240).

The emphasis and the power relationship in what I assert as the photographic trilogy of the subject, photographer, and viewer shifts over time[36]. The control slips from the photographer. Initially it is to the keeper of the images, then the

36 *For an earlier discussion on the photographic trilogy see Chapter One, Framing the literature.*

viewer and that person's relationship with the photograph becomes the heart of the connection, accordingly embellishing its significance. These images and collections are the foundation of life-stories. Consequently they may no longer remain ordinary. Each re-told story with each family photograph adds to the growing cultural history and cultural arrangement of the family. Indicating the photographs on the table in front of her, Julie, during the interview, quietly reminisced:

> Well every one of them is a story. My brother still takes a lot of photographs, the photographs that he takes of me, and the two of us. I will always remember the activity that surrounded that day; a bike ride, or a trip to a panoramic view or something. So I remember ... photos of my son are often, because he lives far away from me now, are often of things that were momentous at the time.

While not front of mind in the daily life of the Baby Boomers, the photograph is shifting from the ordinary to an item of value. Many of the interviewees recognise the growing importance in their family albums. Janet, who was adopted as a very young child, summed up this attitude in stating:

> For me it is a sense of belonging. This was my connection to history and because of my adoption. I, you know it is a little different for me, but I really needed a connection to a generation past. That has always been important to me. That was my sense of belonging.

Although the research participants varied in the handling of their collections of family photographs, no one contemplated discarding them. I noted from the interviews that they all drew some value and a sense of personal association from their collection no matter the quality, or quantity of images. Whilst they are a tangible link to the past, it was also clear from the research that they also provoked memories.

Memory-making

It is not always obvious, but photo-induced memories are frequently about what has not been photographed, or of missing photographs. This is to say that a photograph of one scene may link to other events in the continuing family chronicle. Consequently a factual[37] rendition of a family's history could have

37 *Aspects of truth in family photographs are discussed in Chapter One, An awkward truth, and in Chapter Two, A photographic truth.*

multiple narrations. Interestingly, attributes of truth and accuracy evolve and develop when photographs prompt a story or 'make' a memory.

Interviewee Janet described a trait of her control over her photographs, no matter the circumstances, the actual taking of the picture and their stories as:

> I was just thinking, I don't know if this is relevant or not, I'd never taken an unhappy snap ... every photo is a positive.

Whether this is factual or not, it is what Janet believes, or re-remembers, and as such all the stories based around her photographic images are predicated with that assumption. Janet has built that memory and this links closely with the assertion that family snapshots manifest themselves as testimony of celebration and happiness (Chalfen 1987, p. 99). Similarly another respondent, Ann, used an example of her children misbehaving to show how the emphasis of the photograph and the narration had changed over time. Relaxing in the dining room of her modest home Ann became quite animated and her voice rose as she saw the photograph and remembered the moment:

> Here was one taken up in Queensland and with the kids standing there with a koala in the tree behind them and [son] was really cranky that day and he wouldn't have his photo taken.

At this point Ann sharply tapped her finger on the slightly faded colour photograph for emphasis, and mimicking her children's facial expressions and whining sounds, she continued:

> He's shut his eyes for the photo; [younger sister] took one look at him and she stood there and she shut her eyes as well. So I've got the two kids standing there and [son] just going like that… and [daughter/sister] going awww because she copied her big brother and so they laugh at that photo now. It wasn't very amusing at the time, but yes you know, you remember the day it was taken and where we were. It's one of those photos, special.

Despite the circumstances Ann still took the photograph. It was deemed important at the time, as it was the only sighting of 'wild' koalas during their holiday. Without the story, the background circumstance of this photograph, the casual observer would probably see it as 'kids being kids', just two children acting up in front of the camera. Now with the expanded narrative and the created memories the koalas have become a secondary feature of the picture. It is claimed that people make sense of their lives through specific events

(Richardson 1995, p. 214). However, I develop this contention further and suggest that these events can be commonplace and ordinary, yet have on-going impact and relevance to the family story. In Ann's example the event has been re-remembered. For her and her children the memory is made.

The photograph and the narrative have a multifaceted affiliation. They are viewed and the associated stories told and re-told many times. Often with each telling something new is remembered. Maybe it is a thought, or a desire that is included, so amendments are made. Then these adjustments, or 'the sting of memory' (Denzin 2013, p. 126), become part of the evolving story, collectively embedded in memory to again be triggered by the image. This evolution of memory tells us what they did, what they thought they did and what they wished, or have now convinced themselves that they did (Portelli 2006, p. 36; Thomson 2011a, p. 171). I liken this to re-remembering. Another view is to call this evolution memory-making. Photographs are more than physical artefacts, they provoke, prompt and sustain memories (James, D & Labato 2004, p. 24; Seabrook 1991, p. 174). As texts, photographs reinforce the familiar and reaffirm a sense of belonging to the family or community.

In a slightly mischievous comment, participant Ted noted:

> I'm not allowed to have a view to it, because quite often my view and my memories are totally different to hers, so it's easier if she does it herself.

At this point in the interview we were discussing their numerous photo albums and the stories that Mavis, Ted's wife, was writing around each image. Memory-making through photographs can give cause to conflict. In disputes of the 'facts', whose facts are more justified? Ted was deferring to Mavis, but was also letting her know that he had other – different – memories.

I interviewed John without his wife, as she was not available at that time. He conceded that his recall was more detailed than his wife's and that often became a point of discussion between them. While they do not argue over the finer points that their photographs prompt, according to John, his wife considers that he remembers too much and John has the opinion that she is too sentimental over the images and:

> I think I remember more; there is nothing like a photograph to evoke a memory, but I don't think she has the same thoughts.

As Kuhn (1991, p. 19) asks: 'whose memory is to prevail in the family archive?' She claims it is about constructing our memories and those captured moments, which may be future treasures that when remembered, provide the supporting narrative (Kuhn 1991, p. 25). In discussing the complexities of individuals' recollections of a historical event in Paris in 1961, Amine (2012, p. 190) examines memory-making as being a shared process. Whether the photograph is depicting a known historical event or is a private snapshot of a family activity, the making of memories is similar and not only focused on the individual.

Other scholars over the years have also raised the issue of recollection, memory-making and the reconstruction of past events. Duruz (1994) highlights memory-making as: 'how the story feels, and is framed, from particular positioning' (p. 182). However, there is argument that photographs amongst other family collections are powerful memory-making means that may bind us to a past that often did not exist (Edelstein 2008, p. 163). In a similar and supportive viewpoint, Ziino (2010, p. 137) is of the opinion that family photographic collections often hold stories that are 'post memories' of relatives (and others) whom the archivist has not met. These narratives are vigilantly preserved and become re-remembered. In the infancy of the digital revolution that encompassed photography, it was already being noted that while the photographic memory is captured by the camera, so is memory-making becoming a common practice. Images can be edited, deleted, have narrative added and other corrections made (Smith, J 2001, p. 3). Memory-making commences with the press of the camera's shutter.

I stress that the sample of research participants for this thesis cannot be extrapolated to all Baby Boomers in Australia. However, those in the research pool showed a common desire to keep, and where possible record, some details about their family photographic collections. From the interviews I was able to determine that they have collected or inherited old photographs, family albums and other varied assortments of photographs of the past two, or possibly three generations. Unfortunately, while some prints may have dates and names recorded on them, the narratives are missing. Mervin openly

showed his frustration in not having the detail and the stories with the photographs. His collection of albums and old photographs is extensive. They record life on the West Coast of South Australia over the past one hundred and thirty years. However his memories and stories can only attest to less than half that period:

> It means a heck of a lot to me at the moment, now, because I think as you get older you become more aware of your past and your family's past … or in other words, history, so you want to keep it. My father, he died at eighty six. He had a fantastic memory, but me being pretty damn brainless didn't think to sit down and talk to him about what happened and get him to record it, and do exactly what we're doing now, which I've [since] tried to do with a few other relatives. So you know, and then he died of course, and it was all lost and, you know, he was born in 1911, so had a heck of a lot of knowledge.



Photo 2 *Mervin's father, squatting at the front (his mother second from the right). Taken at Hawker (Flinders Ranges South Australia), 1931, approximately fifteen years before Mervin was born. Used with permission.*

Mervin is researching past generations of the family, based on his collection of photographs. His frustration in building this family narrative is manifested in that his father failed to record anything of his life, and as his son, Mervin had not documented anything either. So Mervin's memories, while triggered by the photographs he holds, are constrained by the lack of supporting narratives

(photo 2). Again, it is noted that often those interviewed are drawn to their early years or to the previous generations to record their stories.

In the personal photo collections I viewed, and the stories I heard and recorded, often memories of tough and difficult times in the interviewee's respective lives would be resurrected. Still, it seemed that while the photograph may have triggered the memory, the image did not, at least on the surface, show those difficulties. Other researchers (Chalfen 1987; Hirsch, J 1981; Rose 2003; Spence, J & Holland 1991), have discovered similar attitudes where family conflicts or tensions are not recorded in the photographs and hardly mentioned in any supporting narrative. This management, or absence of the story has a co-relationship with aspects of Barthes' (2000 (trans)) notion of the *punctum* and the *studium* in family photographs.

The photograph at first viewing has that generalness of the *studium* and it is not until coupled with the story it generates that the *punctum* is revealed. In an opposing view, Robert Adams states: 'for photographers, the ideal book of photographs would contain just pictures – no text at all'. However, he then blurs his argument by suggesting if you must talk about the photograph then 'talk about their subjects – tract houses [sic] or fields or trees or any of the myriad and interesting details of life' (Adams, R 1994, pp. 34-35). Barthes (1977 (trans)-a, p. 32) sees the image as: 'a re-presentation or ultimately resurrection, and as we know, the intelligible is reputed antipathetic to lived experience'. Margaret Olin (2002, pp. 114-115) claims that:

> A reading of Camera Lucida suggests that the most significant indexical power of the photograph may consequently lie not in the relation between the photograph and its subject, but in the relation between the photograph and its beholder, or user, in what I would like to call a 'performative index', or an 'index of identification'.

While the photograph may in its own way provide intimate details of its time and location, my analysis is placing an emphasis on the 'beholder's' stories. That is the final part of the photographic trilogy to which I have often referred. To a lesser extent, my 'beholding' cannot be avoided as I will also identify, in some manner, with the photograph. This position sits comfortably with Barthes' conceptualisation of the photograph (2000 (trans)). Therefore, in the analysis of

my research the ‘index of identification’ by the storyteller is the premise from which I argue on the intrinsic value of these images.

Photo-codicil

As to the future of these Baby Boomer family collections of photographs, there appears to be a consensus from the sample group of wanting to leave a legacy. My interpretation of this appendix, or photo-codicil, is conditional on two key issues. One takes into account the challenging and continuing technological evolution, the digitisation of images, and how their collections are stored and accessed. This conundrum is discussed in *Chapter Five*. The other issue is that the children or grandchildren (descendants, or others inheriting the material) are expected make their own decision as to the worth of the family photographs (also discussed in *Chapter Five*). June mused on this aspect of her desire to maintain her collection for her children as:

> They don’t realise it yet, I don’t think, but they’ll be as inquisitive as we are now of our past. But later on; I think they will anyway.

Ethnographic and autoethnographic research is often written as personal narratives, yet it is suggested that the ‘research tradition does more than just tell stories’ (Duncan 2004, p. 5). Besides participant observation, reflective writing, interviewing and gathering documents and artefacts, there are the personal opinions of the researcher. Similarly, the participants provide varying interpretations about the importance of their photographs. For Shirl, her photo collection and family history is about not forgetting:

> I thought that it was important for me then. I remember thinking I’m taking these photos so that I don’t forget these people, this place, whatever.

While the photographs were taken, the stories were not recorded. Even the details of those photographed, the date, or the place, were left to memory. Unfortunately that memory has faded over the past forty years. Precipitated by a recent house move, hundreds of photographs of her years overseas, and her life during her twenties, were destroyed:

> So I threw away all of my photos, except photos that I thought would have significance for my daughter. And I have culled boxes and

> boxes of photos down to half a shoebox of things that [my daughter] might be interested in, in the future. (Interviewee Shirl)

However, for Carol, it was the personal history and sentiment that had become the hallmarks of her family album value:

> The history has been important to us, and the photos they have some kind of sentimental value to us.

Yet for both Shirl and Carol there is this understanding of preserving the past, but conditioned by their personal understanding of what is currently important to them. On what to keep and what to throw out, the often-pressing need to make decisions, for some, was to abdicate to the future. Interviewee John mused over the future of the boxes of 'stuff' and their importance:

> I think photo records are really important for some people and I don't want to take the responsibility of making a decision about what goes and what stays. So it is all there in boxes and the kids can go, this is boring shit and chuck it out, or they can go 'jeez', this is interesting and keep it. It's up to them.

For John's 'kids' their decision on what to keep or what to discard is likely to be difficult. If they are unaware of the background to individual photographs, the stories, or other details about the family collection, then their decision-making is compromised. From the many discussions I have had with Baby Boomers, it is a common understanding that they consider their domestic photographs as special because of the memories they help generate. The distinctiveness is more than a memory attached to a treasured photograph; it has become who they are, confirming their past and tendering a future. It is a future, of which they will not, in time, physically be a part. Most interviewees expressed strong desires for their photographs to be protected, kept safe and preserved. Their loss, through whatever reason, is akin to a death (Harris, Stefanie 2001).

Collectively the family photographs are an important anthology. Then there are those special images that surpass the mass and become distinctive through an intensity of the relationship with the beholder. I argue that it is often the narrative weaving through the photograph that creates the impact, the punch, and raises its importance for the family. The image cannot stand alone without a narrative and have the same degree of importance or intensity. Regularly

throughout these interviews and my observations of the participants, their history triggered memories of my history.

During the interview, Paul frequently drew the conversation back to his early childhood and spending a few years living in the outback of the Northern Territory with his father and his father's first wife. That is also significant, as it appears that Paul's father and mother never married. Paul had one small black-and-white photograph of himself and his younger brother standing in front of the local mail truck. There was someone else in the photograph, but he is unsure if that is a relative or the 'mail-man'. His story is incomplete. There are some memories of his father being a jackaroo[38] and 'eking out' a living through prospecting that yet again conjoined to my own history.



Photo 3 *A photograph that may depict my paternal grandfather (wearing the 'hat'). Although this photo is marked as taken in 1900, it is more likely to have been taken in 1903-4.*

Paul's reminisance reminded me of stories from my father and of my grandfather, and my early years of employment. Again, I was bruised by the participant's narrative to memories of my own life. This interview with Paul was similar to numerous times throughout the fieldwork where I was drawn to the autoethnographic circumstances of this research. As I recall from listening to my parents talking around the kitchen table, there were occasional yarns my father told of his childhood in the northern deserts of South Australia between 1901 and 1906.

38 *A jackaroo (jackeroo) is a male working on a sheep or cattle station who herds the stock and generally handles the labouring work associated with animal farming. A jillaroo is a female doing the same work.*

In the earlier photograph (photo 3) it has been suggested by some extended family members that the young man wearing the beret and standing against the wall of the building is my paternal grandfather. I have no proof of this; however there is some family resemblance, but that is all. My father rarely talked of his father; I don't know why and I never asked. My paternal grandfather died 25 years before I was born. The image is fascinating to me, but I have no history and no memory of this ancestor. Family legend tells of him, with other Cornish miners, in the mid-1890s, walking and pushing a wooden wheelbarrow some 300 miles from Moonta, via Burra in South Australia, across the state border to Broken Hill in search of work in the developing silver, lead and zinc mines[39].



Photo 4 *Oodnatatta Railway Station (in the background) with camel dray used for carting goods from the rail siding to remote station properties and small Aboriginal communities. Taken September, 1966.*

Later, as a young cadet in the South Australian Police Department I was stationed in the small outback town of Oodnadatta, in 1966. This is an isolated centre of about eighty people and the northern-most town in South Australia. It is nestled between the 'Painted' and the 'Stony' deserts, and the only community within hundreds of kilometres in any direction. Sitting in Paul's Adelaide suburban kitchen I could relate to the outback conditions through my own family history and personal experiences *(*photo 4*)*. As mentioned in Chapter Two, I was a firefighter (fire officer) in the MFS and in 1980 I was part of a 'charity run team' that re-enacted the pioneering feats of those Cornish

39 *The towns of Moonta, Kadina and Wallaroo formed what is called the 'copper triangle' and 'Little Cornwall' at the top of Yorke Peninsular in South Australia. Copper was discovered there in 1842 and the mines had a working life of sixty-three years. (Pryor, O 1980, Australia's little Cornwall).*

miners. About twenty teams from around the State competed. The members of the respective teams ran in relays, pushing replica wheelbarrows along the 'Silver Highway' to Broken Hill (photo 5).

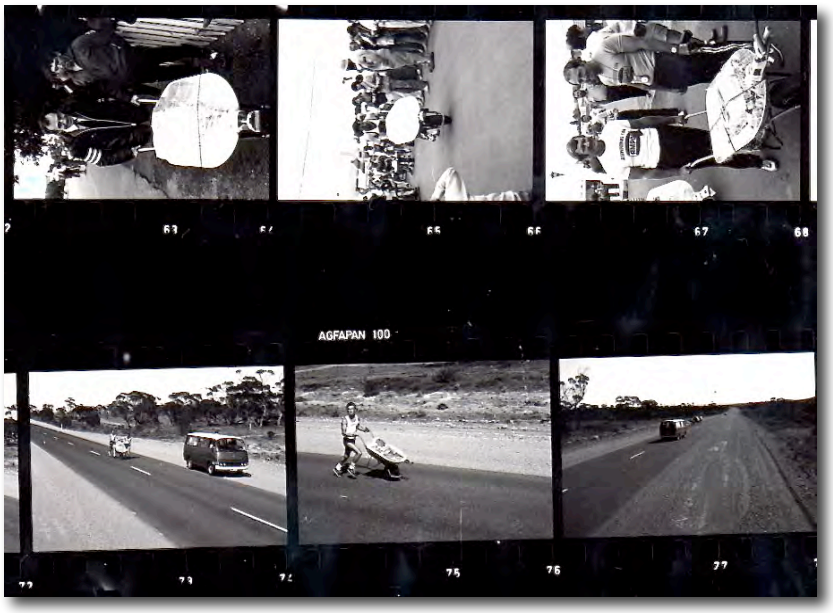

Photo 5 *A group of 'proof prints' from the Burra (SA) to Broken Hill (NSW) re-enactment Barrow Push for charity, January 1983: about ninety years after my paternal grandfather trudged a similar route.*

Thus I have a part narrative, a collection of myth, family legend, oral history, and a personal involvement, all stemming from Paul continuing to pull his story back to his childhood and his memories of living in the outback. For me, the value of this old black-and-white image (photo 3) is raised from interesting and a mystery to something more informative. There are other narratives to this image and they will form part of my continuing research.

Anthropologists, cultural researchers, oral historians, and ethnographers consider that family or domestic photographs expand a cultural understanding (Burgess 2006; Kuhn 2007; Ruby 1996). The 'family' enjoys the developing intimacy through the touching of, and the looking at photographs, and remembering. This interaction with the images and their stories, I suggest, cultivates a concept of the family collective. Aspects of this are accomplished through their photographs to interpret their lives, and create a growing legacy for future generations.

These collections of domestic photographs may not be the most important part of contemporary family history, but they are acknowledged as an *aide-mémoire* for stories, the memories, and prompts to the past. Participant Julie has a continuing interest in her family history. Similarly in the interview with Wendy, she stated that her almost thirty-year-old son has started to show some interest in her photo collection. Speaking on behalf of her son, Wendy claims: 'we see something that really reminds one of the journey that we travel'. Together, they have reinforced what has become important to the family, the growing history, a sense of a 'collective memory' and construction of a past through the telling and sharing of the stories (Confino 1997, pp. 1386, 1387). Narratives evolve and change as new memories, interpretations and memory-making emerge. The photograph becomes an integral part of a family's history, of its sharing and not forgetting. Yet, this history remains a constructed view of the past, as the gatekeeper, or family archivist prudently manages the reputation of the family. The domestic violence, antisocial activities and scandals are carefully avoided (Holland 1991, p. 7).

Gazing at my collection of photographs I do not recall sadness or unhappy times. While a few of those people depicted in the images are dead, or I have lost contact with them, my memories from these images are still of enjoyment and pleasant experiences. There are moments of regret, but unlike some, my life has not been forlorn.

The significance in each photograph

Each photograph can have significance. It may not be immediate and the value of the image may only be realised over time. This assumption, by me, is in contrast with the world renowned 'street photographer' Cartier-Bresson[40], who looked for and selected his 'decisive moment' (Westerbeck & Meyerowitz 1994, p. 153) to capture a photograph. Family snapshots are more in tune with Wordsworth's concept of a spot of time (Harvey 1966). These spots of time can provide entry points to deep memories and imaginings, yet offer inconsistency, uncertainty and incongruity (Bishop, P 1995, p. 106; Kroeber 1975, p. 7). While

40 *Previously discussed in Chapter Two, A focus on methodology – Boundary setting.*

many of the photographs depicting people are posed, they capture a moment of an event and may not be decisive in their own right. However, this does not in any manner downplay their significance. It is the recital of the supportive stories that have so much poignancy and add to the beauty and power of the image (Seabrook 1991, p. 173). This theme or issue is present in most interviews. Wendy, in considering her photo-collection said:

> It is that memory trigger and other people don't necessarily know that significance, though they may glean it from looking carefully at the photo.

Often the number of photographs of older parents and grandparents held by Baby Boomers is limited. This may be because of the prints being lost or damaged over time, or most likely just that very few photographs were taken. Wendy when recalling memories of her much-loved grandmother stated: 'it's significant because there's very few photos left of her'. For Wendy this became a personal regret, thus increasing the value and importance, for her, of the one or two images that she retains.

Interviewee Julie had a more holistic view of family photographs in that she considered them being important and relevant to future generations:

> I don't know how valuable they'll be to future generations, but what I have learnt from the things that I'm interested in, like historical things, is that though they may not appear to be important to me, or to be relevant, to someone in the future they may be incredibly relevant. If for no other reason but for the backgrounds, or the clothes, or they'd become a research tool for someone else.

Most of her life (interviewee) Janet knew that she was adopted and she did not meet her biological parents and family until she was an adult. She holds her photographs as an important connection to a missing past, and claims that they provide her with a sense of belonging. Throughout the interview with her and her husband this was a recurring theme with both of them. Her need of belonging and the value of the family collection of photographs make a significant impression and as she states:

> [it] provides a sense of belonging. I was adopted. But this was my connection to history. Because of my adoption I, you know, really needed a connection to a generation past; that's always been important to me, and yeah, that was my sense of belonging.

The concept of belonging is complex and variable. Belonging continually changes as we change and our life evolves. We belong to various social groups, places of employment, professions, religious or political affiliations, and of course the family, all of which are dynamic. According to Thoma (2006, p. 88), belonging is ascribed: 'by the desire of closeness with aspects of the world, wherever this may be'. The appreciation of belonging is reflected in the early years of the Baby Boomers, when Sweezy (1953, p. 122) notes that people desire (or not) to belong to a social class. A half-century later in discussing the community in its many forms, including the family, Sampson-Cordele (2001, p. 18) maintains 'it can be a feeling, a sense of belonging'. More recently Tinkler (2008, p. 259) declares that: 'adult photographs of children have traditionally served the purposes of establishing belonging and producing a record for posterity'. Thus the family photo-collection becomes a surrogate for the family and its chronicle.

Others in this research voice similar thoughts in that their photographs give them a meaning of belonging, and that there would be something of them left as a legacy. Julie wants to leave a legacy, Bob places significant importance on his collection of older photographs from the family as they gave him his history, and June regards her photographs as showing the family all together. The stimulus to formalise the family history and narratives, plus a growing sense of significance in the family photographic records, can evolve from a number of sources. For Mavis it started when an uncle gave her a photograph of her great-great-grandfather. She collected more photographs of her ancestors and any information she could find about them. In time Mavis began to understand their worth and they have become the origins of her narratives:

> I didn't know those people, because I don't have the memories of them, probably knew [some of] them when I was really little, so that was quite exciting to get those, yeah. I know feel as if the collection I've got is quite comprehensive really and I'm hoping that somebody will appreciate them. I'm enjoying it. I'm just lucky in what I've done and what I've got.

Most of those interviewed appeared to place significance on the collective and the sharing of relationships. However, John uses the photographs of his mother and the grandmother of his children to remember how she was and not how she

became. He saw this as important for his children, ensuring that they would remember their grandmother with love and affection and to see her, decades before they were born, as a happy, vibrant young woman. Sturken and Cartwright (2004, p. 21) suggest that looking at photographs is related to ideology, and that this activity is often diverse and conflicting even with the struggle of what they call 'traditional concepts of good and evil'. Continuing to explore photography and ideology, they consider that the values, and the importance of home and living life clumped together as: 'widely shared social assumptions about not only the way things are but the way we all know things should be' (Sturken & Cartwright 2004, p. 21). For John, it is the importance of the old black-and-white snapshots of his mother that shores up family propriety and maintains the semblance of the united, caring, and loving family unit:

> I think that, that's what photographs do, or to see my mother… as in the old sense of the word as a gay young thing frolicking in the water at Berry Springs in just outside of Darwin, in a bikini with my dad you know, well not a bikini, but a, you know, a top and shorts.
>
> So those kind of things when you think about the way she finished her life as basically a grumpy old lady. You know that's, I see that's important, although the kids remember her as a lovely, lovely grandma, but in her later years she became a bit … kind of a bugger to be with.

It can be construed that photographs can have concurrent meanings and interpretations. In Chapter Two I referred to the polysemic form of photographs. They have the ability to induce a variety of interpretations and this has been the subject of significant scholarly discussion (Lindlof 1995, p. 26; Schwartz, D 1989, p. 120; Sekula 1982, p. 97) amongst others and more recently by Lynda Mannik (2011, pp. 86; 94).

A secret no more – Marc and Carol

Following is an opposing narrative to that of John above. John uses a 'nice and acceptable' image of his mother to blur what he claims as an inconvenient truth for the family. His mother got bitter in old age. Other secrets and hidden stories may be scandalous, embarrassing, or surprising, but it is how they are used and the relationship that the current generation has with them that is important. There is often tension around the photographs kept by the family.

These tensions lead to half-told truths, and puzzles that intend to obfuscate that which may bring discomfort to those with the information or to others if further details were made public. There are family secrets and mysteries. However, this can also set up the challenge or the desire to solve the puzzle. Kuhn (1991, p. 24) argues that: 'acknowledging *in the present* the effects *in the past* of a disturbance in the family [provides] the necessary conditions of a retelling of the family story in its proper order' [original italics]. Plummer (2001, p. 401) provides another perspective on the proper order of a story in that it needs to be seen and understood from the point of view of the speaker.

The ensuing revelations are an emotional and personally revealing history that sits, barely hidden, beneath the surface of daily life of a family. While it reveals secrets about the main characters, it is also reflective of cultural and societal changes over time. Through Marc and Carol's voices I am able to highlight significant aspects of their story and their bond with a few important photographs. This family drama is more than a personal narrative. It evolves as a mutual experience brought together by Marc and Carol's relationship, marriage, their shared history, and tenacity to discover and reinvent a past through a single photograph. Carol and Marc exhibited 'intimate intertwining' that a wife and husband share in their relationship and they performed as a duet (Crichton & Koch 2011, p. 107). Coats (2005, p. 92) states that: 'the joint telling of a story is sometimes described as a duet', and this 'conversational duet' (Falk 1980; Norrick 2005, p. 109) becomes integral to the collaborative narrative. However, the identities of the key people involved have been kept confidential by request. In as much as 'the voices' of the husband and wife can possibly be presented as an account, the following is their story.

In the mid-1960s Marc was told by his mother that the man he had been calling 'dad' all of his life was not his biological father: 'I was totally and completely unaware that my father was someone else'. Born in England, he had immigrated with his mother and her husband to Adelaide. Some years later, when Marc was sixteen, his mother produced a photograph (photo 6) and mentioned that one of the men in uniform was his father. That black-and-white image became the centre of a personal and family investigation into Marc's heritage that spanned half a century.

In the early years Marc was unable to discover much at all about his father as his mother steadfastly refused to provide any further information. It was not until 1988 when Marc and his wife, Carol, were leaving Australia to live overseas for some years that his mother produced two additional photographs of his biological father and family. Marc commented:

> I think she felt that she probably didn't have all that many years left, and so, she decided that she would actually show me these two photos that I'd never seen before, which were two photos of my half sister.



Photo 6 *Marc's mother eventually indicated the naval officer on the far right was his father. The ship's bell with the name 'HMS Musketeer' led to the discovery of further information about his biological father.* *Used with permission.*

At the same time his mother provided rudimentary information about Marc's father, but nothing of his yet to be discovered half sister. Although Marc's mother died in 1990 she did, over her final two years, tell a little more about the background to the central photograph and indicated that the officer on the far right of the original picture shown to Marc *(*photo 6*)* was Marc's father, and that he was in the Royal Navy during the Second World War.

There were a small number of other photographs that included Marc's father and other unknown people. According to Marc:

> They were kept quite hidden, and there were quite a few controversial ones, because I had a half sister as well. My mother kept those to herself; she didn't want to spread them around.

With his stepfather dead, and his mother ageing, Marc felt that she really had little to lose in telling him more about his background. Even then crucial information was not revealed. It appears that his mother thought that once Marc was told the bare facts, that would be it, and everything would go back to normal: 'In telling me that, that I would just put it to rest, and then that would be it'. Secrecy and half-stories were still part of the disclosure. It was apparent that Marc's mother had an affair with his biological father. He had a half-sister and was led to believe that his biological father had died in the United Kingdom. He did not know their names. All he had was the single photograph of a group of unknown officers in the Royal Navy.

In the early 1990s Marc's wife Carol started to investigate the family mystery again. His mother was dead and they had no contacts in England to help with the research. Carol's father was a retired Lieutenant Commander, who served in the British Navy during the Second World War. He was living in Mount Gambier (South Australia) and the photograph was given to him so that he could use his contacts to try and discover anything more about the ship and the five people in the photograph[41]. He died suddenly and the photograph was 'put away' by his wife, Carol's stepmother.

As Carol explained:

> We were very lucky to get the photograph back, because my step-mother was exceedingly, sort of reluctant to let anything go, but we did actually, sort of manage to locate it.

While Carol's stepmother had some idea of the value of the photograph of the five Royal Navy officers for Carol and Marc, to her it was part of her husband's estate and by natural order, now hers. She was exercising her power not only

41 *A detailed examination of the photograph showed the name 'HMS Musketeer' on the ship's bell. This ship, they discovered, was a M-class destroyer, which was launched on September 4, 1942. It performed wartime service in the Home Fleet covering the North Sea and North Western Approaches, to England. In September 1955, one day short of fifteen years after it was launched, HMS Musketeer was sold for scrap. Wikipedia 2013, HMS Musketeer (G86).*

over the estate, but the family as well, by controlling the release of the photograph. While she had no further information about the image, Carol, who was undertaking most of the research, was not going to give up. As she explains: 'it kind of went a bit on the back burner for a while'. It was not until almost a decade later, in 2004, that Carol renewed her investigation. The Internet was becoming popular: 'it really was starting to sort of become interesting; a lot more information was online', so the research was recommenced with some vigour. There were numerous dead ends until Carol came across a website run by a Dutchman who had a passion for the Royal Navy.

Through a series of emails with the Dutch enthusiast and through official, un-official correspondence, and the Royal Navy Retired Officer Lists, Carol was able to compile a significant history of Jack [Smith], Marc's father. He had served in the Royal Navy until the 1950s, and Carol eventually came across the obituary in the Navy Retirement Lists. He had died in October 1994. Carol explained that this was: 'an absolute revelation to us, because we had been led to believe that he had died much earlier'. Now, with a death certificate, the research became faster and more discoveries were made. Over the course of the next few years, Marc and Carol had extensive email correspondence and phone calls with a number of people who might have been able to help them in their research. Adding to their frustration they discovered that the people who had purchased Jack's former home in a small village in Hampshire were working in Cyprus. This led to an extensive international telephone conversation and as Carol described it, 'a gold-mine of information':

> I rang this woman, Rosie Anderson, [the new owner of Jack's former home, who was then residing in Cyprus] and she was charming. She knew quite a lot, she knew the name of his [Jack's] former housekeeper, she knew the name of his former business associate and accountant and she also had a copy of the eulogy that this Judge Chalkley had written and delivered at his [Jack's] funeral.

Visiting an unknown past

In 2006 Marc and Carol travelled to England on a holiday and visited the village in Hampshire. There were some problems and, as Marc described it, the locals were suspicious of this couple from the colonies. They met with his father's former business associate:

> I think he came to the conclusion that we were pretty bona fide, and we found out later that I [Marc] look very much like my father did in younger days.

Marc sat upright and leaned forward to emphasise this point. He was pleased, almost proud that someone had recognised him as Jack's son. Unfortunately though, Marc's stepsister was in poor health and had some (unfounded) concerns that there may have been some legal claim against the estate by this 'colonial couple'. Consequently Marc has never had the chance to meet her.

A surprise came when they met with his father's former housekeeper. She had a video recording of Jack, talking and walking through his home. Marc described it as 'a pedestrian production'. It was taken as his father wandered around the home and the soundtrack picked up his voice, talking with people and describing some of the objects in the residence. Marc commented that:

> It's not the same as being with somebody, but it's modern technology, which reproduces not only an image, but also a moving image, but also a spoken voice, which was something, which is probably the best thing you can get, close to actually meeting the person.

Another chapter to this sixty-year long story evolved on their return to Australia, as this narrative that had its genesis in a single photograph does not appear to have an ending. Through one of the more professional online genealogy sites Carol discovered a family of Marc's cousins, in England, who were 'absolutely amazed' in finding another branch of the family. A whole new genealogical history has opened up for Marc. Not only were there more photographs and details of his father forthcoming, but his extended family and grandparents as well. While their son is leaving the research to Carol and Mark, Carol softly and with a wry smile said:

> He is thrilled. He is very, very proud of the fact that his grandfather was who he was. And one rather tipsy New Year, I think he was even talking about changing his surname.

So the photograph becomes more cherished and the narrative endures.

Drawing an ethnographic matrix

As the ethnographer I can interpret meanings, show the relevance, and discuss the importance of the narrative to the individual and their family. Can Marc and Carol's story and other narratives be explained? We find solace in the telling of stories. Carolyn Ellis (2009, p. 197) suggests that: 'the act of telling a personal story is a way of giving voice to experiences that are shrouded in secrecy'. These experiences are not specific to Baby Boomers or their lives. What has transpired in the past seven decades, I argue, is that the photograph plays an increasingly important role in what was once a purely oral chronicle. Coupled with this is the entwined relationship that individuals have between family photographs and family history – their photographic autoethnography. Family relationships and their relevance to the wider collection of family snaps held by Baby Boomers are complex. Previously I stated that Marc and Carol's story was a personal expedition of discovery. Now this journey has evolved in to a richer narrative. In what Van Maanen (1988, p. 51) calls: 'interpretive omnipotence [where] the ethnographer has the final word on how the culture is to be interpreted and presented', their story is now re-created through this thesis, by me as the ethnographer. I draw on more than just the transcribed words to gain a sense of understanding and clarity around these events. However, and more importantly, it is now part of their family narrative, oral history and legacy.

Significantly, the language and the words used in the interview are key aspects to the analysis and understanding of this story. Also I was there as the participant observer, listening to the inflections in the voices, the humour, sadness, and the wistfulness of what might have been. This was emphasised a number of times throughout the interview. In one case, Marc, in a passing comment during a lull in the interview, reflected on seeing the trappings of his father's life during a visit to England: 'I also viewed the photographs of Jack'. I

was unaware of, or ignored the comment at the time and it was only when listening to the recording of the interview later I was able to hear Marc's almost silent aside. It was the power through the softness and tone of his voice; a sense of longing that arrested my attention.

All of these verbal and non-verbal signals, aspects of what is generally called 'body language', have informed my understanding and interpretation of the event. Over the past few decades there have been numerous popular culture based publications that advocate certainty and specifics derived from 'body language'. This approach of interpreting an important part of communications over-simplifies a complex matrix of issues, sentiments, culture and emotions and is described by Adler, Rosenfeld and Proctor (2004, p. 115) as:

> Nonverbal messages perform [a] valuable social function: They convey emotions…[and are] much better suited to expressing attitudes and feelings than … ideas.

In outlining aspects of autoethnographic interviewing, Ellis (2004, pp 60-61) emphasises the value of the non-verbal interchange. From the account of this non-verbal communication observed during the interview with Marc and Carol, and based in some aspects on cultural understanding and education, I was able to experience a commonality and shared meaning throughout the telling of their narrative.

While often discussed in communication studies and organisational contexts, paralanguage is also relevant in the discourse of ethnography. Paralanguage is the use of tone, pitch and rhythm, amongst other elements, that induce additional meaning and understanding between the speaker and listener (Pappa, Daniels & Spiker 2008, pp. 26, 27). However, the underlying premise of shared meaning and paralanguage is what Aristotle called *ethos.* This is the principle of how our confidence, when talking to others, is based on a range of qualities and values we share (Crockford & Crockford 2005, p. 17).

I have come to realise after numerous readings of the Marc and Carol dialogue, and the other transcripts of these Baby Boomer interviews, that this one photograph and its story, address many of the key aspects of family photo-collections. As for Marc and Carol, they are recording their own photographic

autoethnography. While the depth and rigour required in my research cannot just rely on this event, I strongly suggest that the story is representative of the wider collective (Lincoln & Guba 1985, p. 297; Portelli 1997, p. 6; Van Maanen 1988, p. 7), and when coupled with other examples from the research, inferences and trends can be drawn.

Truths are hidden

Although Marc suggested that the keeping of the secret was to protect him, he recanted this as the only reason later in the interview. Marc's story is initially about secrets, but it is also reflective of the culture of the 1950s. This was a decorousness-driven reaction to unpleasant events that, in western society families, was often shrouded in secrecy especially in the first seventy-five years of the twentieth century. Australia was still emerging from the conservative values of the 'Victorian era'. Sex before marriage, divorce, and children born out of wedlock or as a result of sexual affairs were a significant social embarrassment and the truth was hidden as much as possible:

> So, obviously, they [the photographs] may have been offensive or brought back bad memories… (Marc), or provoked questions that she [Marc's mother] didn't want to answer. (Carol)

Even to talk of these taboo issues was not deemed proper and was widely considered as scandalous. However, emigrating half-way around the world after a hasty marriage or to cover up a family problem was not a phenomenon only undertaken in the post-World War II, years. Again I was struck by how often the stories from the photographs, being told by the interviewees, triggered my own recollections. In the headpiece to this chapter I recounted my family's somewhat embarrassing past – my great grandparents' pregnancy before marriage – and how this was significant in the decision to relocate from Cornwall to Adelaide in 1857.

The attitudes in societies change over time. Now the acceptance of births outside of marriage does not cause any significant social anxiety in Australia, or in many other parts of the world. A newspaper report on research by the Centre for Social Justice in the United Kingdom claims that 'nine out of ten British couples now live together before tying the knot … before World War II it was

fewer than one in thirty' (Chapman 2011, p. 24). From a position of shame, sixty or more years ago, when Marc's mother was pregnant, to have a child without being married is now an accepted occurrence. Embarrassment is a personal experience. Clearly this common emotional state would have reflected on Marc's mother's behaviour – possibly forming the desire to emigrate from England – and her social status.

Australia was also a conservative society in the 1950s and early 1960s and often 'Christian organisations' raised their concerns in public (Hillard 1997, p. 136) and there were:

> Fears about the changes occurring in Australian society during these years, especially in the areas of marriage and family life, and the emergence of a youth culture associated with what was seen as a breakdown in sexual morality among the young.

Consequently, it is probable that Marc's mother experienced what is now acknowledged as a degree of shame through these series of events, spanning decades (Scott 2009, p. 39). Throughout Marc's childhood, the truth about his father was a secret. Then in the late 1960s his mother provided a sliver of information about his biological background in the form of a photograph shrouded in mystery. It was not until 1988, some twenty years later that Marc was able to learn the name of his father, and who, of the five Royal Navy Officers in the photograph, he was. There could arguably have been a dichotomy for Marc's mother in deciding to keep the secret, while simultaneously struggling with her love and sense of obligation to her son. This conflict seems to have been addressed in a convoluted form through providing the barest of information, thus maintaining the sensibilities of propriety (Lapadat et al. 2010, p. 91) and thus hopefully quelling her son's natural inquisitiveness.

I came to understand through exchanges outside of the recorded data that Marc did not have an immediate desire to trace his 'roots'. In fact he was resigned to not knowing anything more about his background. This did not dampen his quest to know, and over the intervening years he would sometimes raise the subject with his mother. These details were withheld, as it were, until after the death of her husband and the pending and inevitable end of her own life. It was following the decision by Marc and Carol to move overseas for career

opportunities that more information became available. However, the desire to discover was always present.

An offered memory

There is the desire to discover that which is unknown and in this instance solve the mystery of who was Marc's father. Secondly there is the desire to link to or discover an unknown past, a connection with lineage. Memory plays a complex role here, as Marc has no history with his father; there is no past, and therefore no memory. Any memory through the photograph for Marc is created. It is new and exciting, but only from the moment he came into possession of the photograph at the age of sixteen. Simultaneously there was another series of memories provoked by this image, those of his mother. In a manner, Marc's mother selected for him what Judith Williamson (1985, p. 123) identifies as being an offered memory, although what his mother offered Marc in the manner of memories was controlled, managed, and limited. Importantly for him however, Marc had a photograph of his father. Thus desire is, I argue, a bifurcated path in this instant and as a consequence different narratives and oral histories can emerge. In an analogous story another participant, Paul, knew of his parents, but was separated from them at an early age: 'I've got a few photographs of life in Loxton[42] with mum and dad and my younger brother, and that's about it'.

During his interview, James recalls having a 'push-cart' (also known as a soapbox) as a young boy. Until he was into his late 40s he believed during that time he lived in a two-storey home in the country. He remembers sliding down the bannisters of the staircase and that there were deep gutters in the road outside. With the discovery of a box of old photographs about ten years ago, he saw a picture of himself as a nine-year old, with his push-cart. He was outside a hotel where his mother worked. In his memory it had been his home. His memories are scant and he uses the few images of that period of his life to confirm his identity and memories.

42 *Loxton is a small town in the Riverland (River Murray) area of South Australia, west of the South Australian and Victorian border – noted for growing citrus, stone fruits and wine grapes.*

In my own case my paternal grandfather is a mystery to me. My unreal memories have been created by a few fleeting comments by my father more than fifty years ago, infrequent interpretation by cousins (who had not met their grandfather either), and a single photograph (photo 3) that may or may not be James Sweet, my grandfather. My memory-making is of this man I never met. Nonetheless I want to believe that it is him; accordingly my oral history, memories and narratives are predicated by this belief.

As Sontag (1977, p. 9) states, the very possession of a photograph: 'gives people an imaginary possession of a past that is unreal'. While Marc undoubtedly wonders about his father – who he was, what he was like, and if he is like him – this was always conjecture. A sense of loss became apparent in our interview and there was an initial sadness around the desire to return: 'to re-experiencing a lost past' (Holak & Havlena 1998, p. 221). Both Marc and Carol were pleased at the apparent physical similarity with Jack. While I could see the facial similarities between the photograph of Jack and Marc, it was the living confirmation that I noticed pleased both him and Carol. This, I felt, put to rest any doubt and confirmed his heritage.

Families have secrets, some are evocative, or what Langford (2001, p. 111) calls 'affectionate family secrets', while others are based around staving off embarrassment. In the case of Marc, his mother appears to have been avoiding embarrassment by not making the details about his father readily known. Subsequent research also appears to support the evidence that this was a deeply buried story, shrouded in secrecy of which no other members of the associated families knew. Events surrounding questionable parenthood are traumatic and give rise to feelings of shame, guilt, possible anger and: 'are regarded as secrets rather than as stories to tell' (Robinson, JA 1981, p. 63). Marc rationalised the secrecy and hiding of the photograph(s) (and associated story) as: 'they may have been offensive or brought back bad memories', for his mother, and possibly her husband. In the interview I did not explore the relationship that Marc had with his step-father, although I gained the impression that it was strained and that they were not particularly close.

There are no photographs of Marc with his father (Jack), even as a baby, or apparently of Jack and Marc's mother. While there was a degree of disappointment in not having met Jack prior to his death, having made the discovery, it was then seen as an opportunity to celebrate his life. Marc and Carol have spoken with a number of people (including some family members) about Jack, and Carol is continuing detailed research into his life in the Royal Navy. In the interview Marc avoids discussing the secrets of his mother; they are put aside and kept private, so that the life of his father can be experienced. The photograph of Jack is a connection for Marc and the continuing research and discoveries are testament to that.

From the interview I clearly understood that Marc felt some form of connection to his biological father, and from that he has developed a sense of an extended family. The enrichment to this family's life, emanating from one photograph, is significant. While it opens up issues around Marc's mother's past and degrees of sadness, there are however, aspects of sentimentality and satisfaction. This is a new union, which evolves from a special photograph and now questions the family genealogy.

Similarly Nobel, (2004, pp. 242, 243) sees this action as: 'the principle of connection, which is integral to the sense of family [and] is fashioned … through objects'. It is an accepted practice for parents to use such things as family photographs and family stories to give their children that heritage (Van House et al. 2004, p. 7). What Marc is experiencing is the opposite to what is considered the normal evolvement of a sense of family. As Smith (1999, p. 97) points out, the images of Marc's father (in this instance) are used to redefine his past and create new narratives. Gibson (2008, p. 89), citing her research, considers that this connection to a deceased person's photograph or photographs is honouring that person's life. In undertaking a close interrogation of the interview with Marc, there are clear indications that both Marc and Carol feel an obligation to honour Jack's life. Their narratives now protect a discovered history with a degree of sensitivity and comfort, while providing an enhanced heritage for Marc's son and grandchildren. Whereas the photograph of Marc's father has always had some value or worth attached to it, this importance has grown over

time. With more of the story unfolding, as Marc and Carol continue their research, this one image enriches the lives of many and augments their legacy.

Conclusion

Family photographs continue to evolve over time. They are employed and shaped through social and cultural diversity, and family relationships. Not all reflect happy moments or those perfect times. While the photograph itself may reveal a little of the detailed background to the scene, it is the memories and stories inextricably linked to the image that give it its power and influence. I do not consider that there is conflict or incongruity between the theorists (Chalfen 2006; Cronin 2006; Drazin & Frohlich 2007; Holland 1991) who suggest that the family photograph is about the future, whilst at the same time, those taking the photographs initially see them as a memory, and a reminder of the past. The family collection is both. As evident from the research, when prompted the Baby Boomers see their collections as part of their history, and simultaneously acknowledge them as their legacy. Julie, in her interview, unambiguously articulated this attitude:

> I'd like to leave a legacy, but I'm also enjoying it now, myself. I like to have it; it gives me my own research too. I can go back and think about something, or look at something and say, ok, that was there, right, ok. So, it's useful as a guide for me, like a map is. For the future, all you can ask for, I think, is that it might be useful to someone.

Visiting people's homes and interviewing them provided me, as the ethnographic researcher, a unique view of their family. Through the interviews I became aware that each participant has a collection of photographs that they consider important, or for them reflect Barthes' *punctum*. Participant Julie is drawn to her past and early years by her mother's influence and now Julie is emulating that with her son. She states that the photographs of the past give meaning to the present and offer future comfort. Two male interviewees, Ted and Ross, however, have an appreciation of family photographs from a differing perspective. They do not have photographs of their early life. In acknowledging this gap they feel that something is missing from their history and memory and are searching to find it.

Interestingly, all of those interviewed are drawn to their early years and their discovery of the past through their generational and family history. My observation is underpinned by the argument that: 'early impressions tend to coalesce into a *natural view* of the world' [original italics], and irrespective of later life events those first notions tend to survive (Mannheim 1952, p. 298). In my research, the family photographs played a principal role in this discovery.

A consistent theme in this thesis is my argument that with photography there is a trilogy relationship between the photographer, the subject and the viewer[43]. While both the photographer and the subject are important aspects of the photograph, it is through the viewer that the value of the image is assured. The aura of the photograph is enhanced when there is a related narrative. The photograph of the five Royal Navy officers (photo 6) is a significant demonstration of this. Had Marc come across this photograph without any story to its origins it may have been of passing interest, but it would not have had Barthes' *punctum*. However, with a few words from his mother the image took on an importance that has dogged Marc's life for close to fifty years.

Power and control are often mentioned when it comes to the keeping, displaying, and the stories around the photographic collections. Whether it is a single photograph as in Marc's case, or destruction of the images as experienced in other instances, or as described in the headpiece to this chapter, these are examples of control. Exercising this power is seen as an individual's desire to direct how current family members and future generations should view the family history.

While a photograph can be interesting, or it may even capture the viewer's attention, it is the supporting story, 'the rings of research', which establishes the impact. This story grows and changes over time, and between people. It takes on characteristics of further cultural understanding either of time past or through current interpretation. A mother's utter frustration with her two young children 'destroying' the scene of them being photographed with 'wild' koalas, twenty years ago, has been replaced. The now adult children have their own interpretation, memory, and value of the photograph. It is different from that of

43 *Discussed in Chapter One, Framing the literature – The focus on literature.*

their mother's, but she shares their memory and the status of the image has evolved.

The growing engagement with photographic autoethnography as a method of research became apparent to me through the interviews with the research participants. I was able to observe how they use their photographs to direct, or underpin their history and record their lives. Even when there have been family tragedies or indignities, the photographs tend to survive. It is the stories surrounding these images that are edited, changed, embellished, or just not told. Yet the photograph, even with the controlled narrative, is still valued. These captured moments in time often have a lasting role in the genealogy of families. Through creating preferred yarns and memories about relatives and friends, or by having mysteries to be solved, the family picture collections grow in importance.

The research indicates that families place considerable value on the existence and preservation of their photographs. Boomers' photographic repositories continue to give birth to a new compendium of stories, a new complement of memories, and an enduring heritage for future generations to savour and interpret. The 'onioning' reveals a repeated allure to the participants' early photographs and memories. This became a significant realisation for me as I analysed the data from the interviews. Those interviewed tended to refer to this 'allure' and the associated memories as their nostalgia. Often they reserved their reverence for the transitional images of themselves over the years and this became a further nexus between our lives as Baby Boomers.

> *I think my pictures mean my identity as a member of a family and a sort of a person in a long line of forebears. I don't know, I think nostalgia has a lot to do with it, our own photographs in particular; they do bring back wonderful memories. Memory is a funny thing because it can be so transient, and it needs a kind of vision stimulation to sort of bring back the essence of an experience. And so photographs are important like that, because I do, every now and again, go through them and think oh yes, and it does bring back a time or an experience, or a holiday, or a relationship, or memories of a person; earlier ones – I mean, I sort of look at my parents and think, oh goodness me, I remember them when they were older, and what a contrast. So, nostalgic.*
>
> *(Interviewee Carol)*

The strange familiarity of times past and threads of nostalgia are the focus of this chapter. Fostering a broader interpretation on the vicissitudes of nostalgia, the essence of how the participants engage with nostalgia is critiqued. The two aspects, that of familiarity and the threads of nostalgia, strongly link with the underlying research of this thesis – that of family photographs, memory, memory-making and legacy. Interconnected to this is the desire of Baby Boomers to tell stories of their past with the tales and myths that have been passed onto them, through their family photography. I study these narratives and discuss how they continue to draw the observer to their past. Often the viewer experiences a feeling of warmness when gazing at a photograph. If that photograph is personal, we are comforted to be wrapped in its history. When that image is from another's collection, a friend's, or stranger's, then we may extract the meanings it has for us, and look to be moved to occasions of our own nostalgic epochs. While a person 'can be nostalgic for something one never experienced' (Green-Lewis 2000, p. 66), I use the subjects' experiences with their family photographs and reveal how they trigger my own reminiscences to better analyse this study.

It is difficult to settle on a single understanding of what nostalgia is, or what it represents. In the 1970s nostalgia was considered as something positive from the past (Davis, F 1979, p. 18). However, I debate this 'positive understanding'

throughout the chapter. There is a dark side to nostalgia as well. Here I draw on the photo-stimulated memories of twenty interviewees from the research group. Three of these recollections are prominent, and I show how they are resurrected in my memory through the stories of others.

There is an acceptance by many of the research participants that nostalgic memories are beautiful, wistful and sentimental. However, nostalgia is more than 'nice' memories. Nostalgia is experiencing the pang of time passing, of loss and bitterness and no longer participating in that former life (Krips 2000; Pickering & Keightley 2006; Routledge et al 2012). With their comprehensive research into memory and nostalgia Routledge et al. (2012, p. 458) argue that the analysis of nostalgia narratives indicates that:

> Although these narratives feature some negative affect (e.g., sadness, loss), positive affect is more prevalent.

Often nostalgia is a remembered feeling of childhood (Stewart, K 1988, p. 232) or, I suggest, the recalling of a special time in our past. However, the bitter-sweet recognition and sentimentality are also part of nostalgia and loss through death, or other events can pervade any pleasant memory (Krips 2000, p. 301).

My research shows that the photograph is not only a memory-maker, but is used to confirm the embedded 'facts' of the narrative. This concept of embedding a story in a selected image 'as the nostalgic symbol through which everyone in the family understands the past and consequently, the present' (Edelstein 2008, p. 155) permits the photograph to function as a familiar sign post. The sharing of the photograph between family members (or others) will evoke different memories and points of view. Our memories need to be refreshed and re-remembered periodically otherwise they are likely to fade and become hazy (Halbwachs 1992 (trans), p. 24). This loss of remembering can be reconstructed through family talks and sharing of stories and family orality. Although discussing autobiography – I deem that these observations can also relate to autoethnography and the photographic autoethnographic method. Price (1994, p. 172) describes the photograph and its narrative as:

> What is said about a photograph depends on what is perceived by the viewer, who must, according to the use intended for the photograph, resolve, explicate or ignore the significant tension between 'heightened by life' and 'paralyzed by fact'.

Throughout this chapter I discuss the correlation and at times friction between the stories, the photographs, and the varying memory paths they convey to the viewers. As a general observation, that I only came to appreciate after further questioning of the data, every person interviewed drew me to their early memories through photography. The engagement with early reflections did not come about because of my specific questioning; each participant initiated nostalgic remembrances of their own family photography. While the individual circumstances differed, their appreciation of the photographic record and the memories they generated (or had lost because there we not any photographs) are a common theme.

The power of the person looking at the photograph, over the one being looked at, is an issue[44]. People viewing an image determine their relationship with it. Thus, the fond memories and yearning nostalgia are personal, they vary with each viewer and possibly with each viewing. During a telephone interview in 2013 with John Adey we were discussing the relevance of personal photographic collections when he commented:

> Our birth certificate shows when we were born, a death certificate is issued when we die – our photographs show when we lived.

The photographs collected by Baby Boomers are documents while the narratives linked to these images add the *pathos*, *logos* and *ethos* to those memories and evolving nostalgia. These narratives, or oral chronicles, are portrayed by the participants in three parts, charting 'not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, and what they now think they did' (Portelli 2006, p. 36). Portelli is not suggesting that people mislead or lie, but he accepts that with time and the re-telling of the narratives, there are subtle changes in emphasis and understanding, and such processes 'reveal a great deal of the speakers' relationships to their history' (2006, p. 36). Thus the foundation of context and understanding highlights the importance of

44 *Concepts of power are also discussed in Chapter Two, A focus on methodology – Where is the control?*

language and how it is used to provide meaning, influence and to inform others (Crockford & Crockford 2005, p. 38).

The interviews examined in this chapter raise a number of common and recurring themes that have a reflective feel about them and are not, as described by Hutcheon (1993, p. 245), a critical review of the past by those involved. The family celebration is a consistently shared topic. Although the camera has captured those special moments, often the information about the photograph is not documented, so any stories are reliant on contemporaneous memory. At times the oral history is available in the recollections of the narrator, but otherwise it is not recorded. While those interviewed showed a fondness for their images and the accompanying stories, they did at times produce conflicting memories – a melancholy of sadness, of bullying, separation, missing family members, and grief. During the interviews, and with the ongoing analysis of the data, I have been unable to remove myself from the impact of their stories. Yet they continue to nudge me, and consequently encourage my warm memories and my nostalgia.

Wistful moments

Three of the interviewees openly expressed a strong fondness for particular images in their albums and collections. Two interviewees, Julie and Mervin, talk of their own children and those memories that give them feelings of melancholy. For Paul however, it is recalling his own childhood that now elicits that pensive sadness of lost opportunities and a yearning for what could have been.

In one instance interviewee Julie broke her conversation regarding some old photographs of her grandparents, abruptly stood-up, slowly walked across the lounge room and picked up a framed colour photograph of a young boy. It was nestled amongst a small collection of similar images on a bookshelf. She hesitated. I waited. It was dead air. The photograph was of her son as a school-boy. With her back to me Julie eventually spoke, quietly: ‘apparently, he’d been bullied at school. He didn’t talk about it much’. While feeling a sense of loss and pain on behalf of her son, Julie was happy in having the photograph, as it brought back happy memories as well:

> [It was] a dreadful memory for him. There are good ones. When we went [overseas] he was very popular because he was an Australian and he stood out in the school … His teacher, who'd been to Australia on secondment, gave a talk at the assembly and introduced him. So, everybody knew him and the teacher said, 'make him feel welcome'. So people would come up to him and say; 'g'day Brian', 'hello Brian', and he said it was wonderful. He didn't know who they were, but they all knew who he was. So, that was a good memory, and when he sees that photo of him in his [school] uniform, I think he feels that was a good time. But the earlier ones when we were on the move a lot seem to bring out sadness in him.

The blurring of happiness and melancholy often became apparent during the interviews. Mervin showed a special fondness for his collection when looking at photographs of his sons as young boys. His divorce from their mother meant that he did not have very much contact with them through their pre-teen and teen years. In the interview it was obvious to me that Mervin still feels a sense of loss, and a continuing level of anger, over those missed occasions. Although he now sees his sons and their families often, that ache lingers. The stories flowed quickly as he flicked through his large photo album. His eldest son getting black-rimmed glasses was a fond memory and discovering that he was allergic to bananas added some humour and lightened the tension in the room:

> When he was about seven or eight he, all of a sudden he became allergic to bananas, and his top lip stuck out and he was like Donald Duck.

The photographs have recorded these family moments and now they trigger the remorse of Mervin's nostalgic memories.

As a young boy, Mervin's second son was 'sports mad', and the photographs showed his passion. There is a collection of snapshots of this son playing in the vacant paddock next door to their home:

> He'd spend hours and hours and hours just kicking the football to himself out there and during the cricket season he'd be out there banging the ball up against the back wall.

His youngest son was only eleven years old when Mervin and his wife separated: 'I don't really have a heck of a lot of memories about [him], apart from the fact that I used to put him to bed every night'. The photo album seemed to confirm that lack of memory, as there were only five or six photographs of Mervin's youngest son randomly placed throughout its pages.

Paul's early years were hard and lacked the love of his immediate family. He had been fostered out to a range of relatives until he was a teenager. During the interview with him and his wife, Paul candidly discussed his youth. Looking back on these early years he acknowledges that it was difficult. But as he didn't know any different then, to Paul it was normal. Despite those experiences the few photographs he salvaged of his early history help him to recall his past with fondness:

> That's a beautiful photograph though, isn't it? I mean … I could probably grab sixty-six, and they'd all evoke a fond memory in some way of a good time.

Through our own life experiences we understand that trauma clouds the lives of many people, their families and their activities. Individually people manage trauma differently (Hutching, 2011). However, often there are memories, occasions and certainly photographs that remind people of their past ordeals. It is interesting to note that Mannik (2011, p. 85) suggests that: 'negative or sad memories are invaluable in understanding the experience … [and] they allow the individual voices to surface'. While Mannik is writing about forced migration, the impact of trauma on individuals can be dramatic no matter its origins and photographs can: 'inspire the telling of emotion-packed memories' (2011, pp. 84-85).

An accidental field note[45]

Attesting to ethnography and participant observation in a natural setting (Lindlof & Taylor 2011, p. 145) I found myself sitting in a dark and slightly foreboding lounge room. The occasion was Valmai's eightieth birthday celebration (photo 7). Valmai's husband, her younger sister Joyce, Joyce's husband and Valmai's eldest daughter, Sue (Joyce and Sue are Baby Boomers) were quietly conversing amongst themselves.

Earlier in the day the two sisters, with their husbands, were joined by their older brother and spent part of the afternoon exploring the family's former farm at

45 A more comprehensive article on this observation was published under the title: Vida: a pastor's wife, in the Oral History Association 2015, Journal 37, pp. 26-31. The names differ between the thesis and article because Vida, subsequent to the initial interview, gave permission for her name to be used in the OHA article.

Freeling[46], north of Adelaide. Most of their time that afternoon they agreed transpired as ‘a nostalgic visit to the old homestead’. It is now in ruins. A collapsed tin roof, broken local stone and pug walls[47] are all that is left. The once flourishing garden is now non-existent. Their conversation was a romantic reminiscence, nothing overly critical, or dwelling on the personal hardships; those challenges were just accepted as life back then.

Barry, in citing James Clifford contends that: ‘the very presence of an observer, no matter how seemingly neutral, "provokes" a specific situation’ (Barry 2010, p. 499; Clifford 1983, p. 77) (original emphasis). While both Clifford and Barry use the camera as their predominant observer, in this instance I know myself as the witness, annexing my interpretations of the events around me. Another approach in ethnographic research considers detached observation. Although invited in to this suburban lounge-room, I am ‘an outsider’, and detached from the three main participants being observed (Thio 2007, p. 28). I am not questioning the three women, I am simply listening to them talk amongst themselves. On the floor, between them, is a medium-sized plastic storage box about two-thirds full of black-and-white photographs (photo 8). They are packaged in plastic sleeves and large brown paper envelopes, and assembled in some order known only to Valmai. Some of the paper envelopes had a brief description – ‘the



Photo 7 *A 'baby' photograph of ‘Valmai’ who celebrated her 80th birthday in 2010. c. 1932. Used with permission.*

46 *Freeling is a country hamlet, about sixty kilometres north of Adelaide, made popular by the Australian television drama, McLeod’s Daughters.*

47 *Pug walls, in South Australia were generally constructed by using local native saplings and tree trunks (stringy-bark was quite popular) to construct the walls of a building or house. The gaps between the lengths of timber were filled or ‘pugged’ with mud and clay, which was sourced locally.*

farm', 'Deb Ball', or 'family 1950' – written in pencil across the front. As the musing progressed, Valmai's hand dives into the box, retrieves another random selection of pictures; a lucky dip for the next accidental story or memory.

For the younger sister Joyce the family gathering appears to be more about a discovery of her past than just memories. The memories and nostalgia are present, but there are numerous exclamations of: 'I don't remember ... [or], I never knew that photo existed.' It was not that Valmai had kept them hidden, she just had not often shared the photographs with anyone. Valmai's daughter Sue sat quietly listening to the stories. Occasionally she asked a question or commented on one of the photographs, as they passed between the three women.



Photo 8 *Valmai and Sue, sifting through the plastic container of the carefully organised and maintained photographs.*

Held almost in reverence, the very small black-and-white contact prints, or photographic 'Art Post Cards by Marchant's Studio Tanunda and Gawler, SA' are selected and studied[48]. Their stories unfolded. There did not appear to be any embellishment to the memories. Often an item or object in a photograph was commented on – a cardigan and who knitted it, a confirmation cross, or the old lathwork rendered rainwater tanks at the back of the house, which seems to be the preferred backdrop for family group photographs – and the stories flowed. I listened as their snapshots conjure a rich and warm journey of their past, reconstructed memory, and happiness.

There are photographs of those long dead – strangers to everyone but Valmai. These well preserved images are treated with reverence as the dead are momentarily resurrected. It is suggested, by Pickering and Keightley, that we 'are all prey to nostalgia, particularly where a vehicle of personal memory, such

48 *Marchants's Studio in Gawler remained a family business until it was sold in 1975. More than just a photographic studio, the business also catered for snapshot photographers, operating a successful developing and printing service with about fifty agencies in the country towns north of Gawler (Noye, JR 2007, Dictionary of South Australian Photography: 1845-1915).*

as a photograph of a dead parent or lost lover, may touch us emotionally' (2006, p. 935). To me, as the detached observer, this emotion was obvious as the minutes ticked by and the others in the room talked of different things, while Valmai, Joyce and Sue continued travelling through their history. Interestingly, their conversation did not jump time and burst back to the present. Names were remembered, details of these former lives were spoken of with affection, some nostalgia, and at times longing. Their conversation was of memories, passionately stirred up by valued photographs, of known people, of times past.

Throughout the almost two hours, as this photographic autoethnographic and oral history explanation evolved, I sat, listened, observed, and became the silent and unrelated voyeur. There are no photographs on permanent display in this room. In the adjacent dining room and kitchen there is a wall of family groups and portraits, and the refrigerator has a few colour prints attached to it with button-shaped magnets. Later, the plastic box with its treasured memories, capturing the photographic *punctum,* was returned to its archival storage, under the bed, once again readied for the next unplanned opportunity to view its contents, or as mused by Valmai 'for Sue and the others to sift through when I die'.

While the three women did not exclude the others in the room from their memories and stories, there was a tacit acknowledgement that this was their personal reminiscence. The others there talked of beekeeping, honey and gardening. Later that evening I wrote about this event in my journal. After reviewing the notes and some thoughtful recollection I accept that not everything was recorded. What has been noted is just one version of the truth, but it is how I have remembered the evening, interpreted the activities, and selected those aspects, which I found to be worthwhile. The ethnographer: 'at best … "recreates" her memories as written scenes which authentically depict people's lives through selected, integrated details' (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw 1995, p. 67) (original emphasis). Bochner, (2000, p. 206) describes this activity of story-telling: 'there is no fixed truth of the past to which we can gain access; everything we say and mean and make of the past is a form of revision'. Correspondingly for those telling the stories, or having stories told about them, it becomes a renewing of their lives. My observations from this evening of

reminiscence further confirmed the desire of those interviewee Baby Boomers to engage in a reflection of their lives. They use their family photographs to help resurrect those memories.

Later, talking with Sue, she confirmed that her mother's photographs stirred up her own past. Her memories differed – they were of being a young child, visiting the family farm and exploring the old farmhouse before it became a ruin. Her thoughts jumped from the long drive to the farm in a FJ Holden[49], being the peace-maker between her younger and squabbling siblings, to playing with her cousins at the farm: 'they were nice thoughts, kind of nostalgic for me'.

A personal connection

Valmai and her husband live in small 25-year-old home, which is nestled in a redeveloped area of an inner northeast suburb of Adelaide. This evening became an example where the methodology, as discussed in Chapter Two, evolved somewhat. I am with this family as an invited guest, not the formal researcher. However, I believe that a quest for knowledge and the assumption of research are never put aside. Richardson (2000, p. 16) describes this as the ethical construct of the ethical self, engaging in:

> … ethical ethnography from which we cannot separate ourselves, but provides methods for claiming authority over both the subject matter and its members.

Being the narrator of these events I author my stories through my research and this thesis. My observations and understanding of the conversations provide me with an entwined subjective and objective insight to this engagement with a conservative, but interesting circumstance of family nostalgia that arises from my interpretation of their collection of family photographs (Woodley-Baker 2009, p. 23). The others there have their own accounts of that early evening gathering. Subsequent to that evening of the family gathering I spoke with those involved and gained permission to use my interpretation in this research.

49 *The Holden car, now part of the GM company, commenced its production of the FJ 'family car' after the end of the war in 1945, in Birkenhead in South Australia.*



Photo 9 *The plaque in Vickers Vimy Reserve, Northfield commemorating that great aviation feat.*

At the end of this tree-lined street was the location of Adelaide's first airport, the Northfield Aerodrome. Ross Smith, later to become Sir Ross Smith, landed his Vickers Vimy (a World War 1 bomber bi-plane) here at the culmination of the first plane flight from England to Australia on March 23, 1920 (photo 9). When I was a young boy, during car trips through this area, my father would often tell, and retell, the story of his moment of being part of this historic event. Now lost over time, there had been a photograph of my father as an eighteen-year-old taken on that March day in 1920. He had walked and hitched rides from his mother's home at Parkside to watch the Vickers Vimy land at Northfield. The press of the crowd that day was too great for him to catch little more than a glimpse of the Australian heroes, but he was there. He saw the plane and his stories made that historic moment mine as well. There was a small black-and-white image of my father, almost unrecognisable in the mass celebrating the success of the first aeroplane flight from England to Australia, that is part of my memory – twenty-seven years before I was born. From this, long lost, old photograph that was buried in the bottom drawer of the sideboard in our dining room at home, I can remember my father in his suit and tie, white shirt, and bowler hat jauntily smiling at the camera. I have his bowler hat, but I lament the loss of the photograph. Thus, an evening celebrating a birthday milestone with some loved photographs, which have no direct relevance to me, still reveal memories for each of us.

Discovering family nostalgia

Many of those interviewed describe that there is something exceptional in the delight and sheer satisfaction of coming upon a photograph of an ancestor. A newly discovered image can yield additional verve to their research. They express this as opening up a hitherto unknown life event from the past and offering new narratives to interpret. Consequently its physical being becomes a real and tangible part of a family's history. In examining her interviewing techniques, Walmsley agrees that photographs are a good support as they prompt discussions, establish chronology and corroborate other discoveries (2006, pp. 192-193). This reinforcement is valid no matter the recall abilities of those being interviewed. Building on the discussions in Chapter Two, photographs appear to be a subordinate tool in the recording of oral history and ethnographic research. It is suggested by Atkinson and Delamont (2005, p. 825) that photography and ethnographic research:

> … [have] often been oddly divorced from the mainstream textual practices of the ethnographic monograph … [and have] also been relegated to a somewhat specialist subfield.

Here again I reiterate the benefit of applying photographic autoethnography as a method of research.

Through examination of dusty tomes, parish records, often almost indecipherable copies of old files and pouring over worn documents and maps, a scenario of ancestors or of an individual can be compiled. In very few cases we chance upon a letter or even more engaging, a diary. Yet, it is often the case that a photograph does not have much in the way of a story to support it. At best there may be a date, a name or two or some cryptic message such as 'mum in the garden.' Whose 'mum', where is the garden, when was the photograph taken, or by whom? This is part of the frustration experienced by researchers in general and specifically those interviewed for this thesis, when discovering photographs without any captions. In reminiscing about the manner in which her mother and older brother maintained the family collection of photographs, interviewee Mavis stated:

> They never used to write on the photo, because [they] knew who they were and they didn't realise generations down, that other people don't know who they are. When it comes to family history it's really sad I reckon, when old photos get chucked out. Because there's, well we don't know who they are, so let's clean up. It's not right.

Later in this interview, Mavis claims that she regularly shows photographs to others when she is with family members, with the hope of identifying the people photographed and to learn more about the history of the family and the details of the pictures.

Ancestral signposts

People, in tracing their family roots, seek historical accuracy. They pursue the stories, the relationships and remembrances of often forgotten family members (Martin, P, Hafestad & Diedrick 1988, p. 533). My research supports this claim, but I further assert that these family stories are only temporary as they fade, change, disappear through time, or over generations. I argue that the family photo-collection presents these photographs as the ancestral signposts, capable of drawing others into the many-faceted chapters of our lives, and those of past generations. The stories linger during our lifetime. Then they can face reinvention, or extinction.

In analysing the interviews it became apparent that there was a strong theme indicating a practice and often a desire to photographically record what individuals see as important. These life events are the spots in time that become special in our respective families and the pointer to our nostalgic reminiscence. However, there is diversity in what the individuals in the research groups consider as important. This diversity is not founded in one consideration being better or dominant over another, just different. In discussing cultural and social disparities in oral histories Taylor (1997, p. 8) concludes:

> A comparative approach allows us to set their experiences in the social and cultural formations within which power and wealth were distributed and to explore the ideology which legitimised those structures.

Referring to this diversity, most participants made general comments about the importance of their photographs during the discussions. Specifically five of

those interviewed had a clear understanding of what their collection of photographs meant to them.

Chris described his family photography as:

> Capturing history … you've got a photograph there and it's capturing a moment.

Of their family photographs, Mary claimed:

> They're good to look back on, but all the time I'm documenting family things that are going on.

Then she commented further – referring to a day of bike riding with her brother:

> So I have memories of that day, and only from a couple of photographs, but it's as vivid as if it were yesterday, and I find photos do that for me.

Julie considered that:

> Some of my photographs are duty; they are based on the idea that I have to record this moment in time.

As the ethnographer, I consider this 'duty' is part of our cultural behaviour in using photography to capture and record a spot of time.

In a more objective view, interviewee John reflected:

> [Family] photography, it's a bit of a cliché, but it's true, photography is all about recording things … you are recording a moment in time and I think that's the, that's the charm of photography.

It is important to acknowledge that the narrative is formed and moulded by the culture in which we live and people, the story-tellers, execute this in a manner that communicates to their audience(s) (Thomson 2011c, p. 88). Interviewee Janet related an incident around an important wedding anniversary. She had left work early to come home and prepared an intimate dinner for two. Chris, her husband, was late. Eventually Janet gave up waiting and had eaten a sandwich, alone. An argument brewed after Chris finally arrived home. Then stomping off to the bedroom in 'a tizzy [sic] fit', Janet discovered laying on her pillow a collection of photos that Chris had put together:

> They were in a romantic album, tied with a ribbon and everything, and that's what he had been doing … that collection has a special spot in my heart.

Yet more than just this one narrative, that 'romantic album' prompts and teases the memories, loves, lives, and numerous other stories of Chris and Janet's family over decades. There is a wider audience than just the viewers of personal photographs that understands the cultural and social activities of family celebrations in Australia. These memories, stories and traditions are personal, yet they form the characteristics of shared experiences in a family (Finnegan 2006, p. 177). It is also a doorway to what Chris and Janet consider as their nostalgic musings (photo 10). Even without delving into the contents of the album the illustration on the cover portrays a romanticised nostalgic concept. Here the woman is passive, and the male is cast in a classic dominant role, which is significantly different to the events of the evening in question. This life event was a tense incident, but there were pockets of positive nostalgia and the memory is now considered a humorous moment and the memory is upbeat.

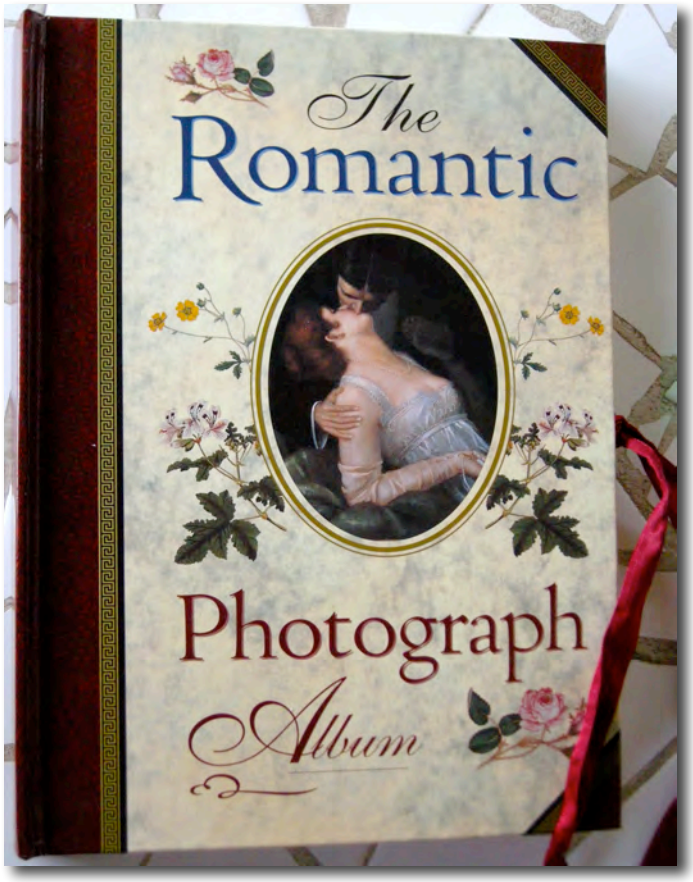

Photo 10 *The special album, which caused a 'tizzy fit' on Chris and Janet's wedding anniversary.*

There are in our ever-growing anthology of albums, shoeboxes and computer storage systems similar collations waiting to be created. Some of those whom I interviewed have been able to manage the sheer volume of images by sorting them into themes. 'The holiday' is a popular topic, and two couples have made individual albums,

as a gift to celebrate the fortieth birthdays of their respective children. Others have made a special collection of funny moments, vehicles owned, sporting activities, dress-up and fashion, and so the list goes on.

Often this collection of material objects has little monetary value and are frequently quite ordinary (Gibson 2008, p. 9). Barry (2010, p. 507) writes that 'collecting is considered a form of taxonomy', and in this case, Baby Boomers are looking to classify their lives. There are oral and family history researchers who believe that each discovery based on their collections is another level to explore, and this eagerness can be likened to a passion (Bishop, R 2005). Collecting photographs is a cultural manifestation that has only evolved during the past 170 years. Nevertheless, photographs cannot provide permanent evidence of the past, as they are a cultural expression that changes over time (Becker, K 1992). The proliferation of photographs and shelves of photo albums are a significant part of this 'collection', and they prompt the memories and stories and assist in constructing the culture, thus the history of many Baby Boomers' lives. Yet, there is so much that can be interpreted from a single image. There are the people, family members, friends, the event, and the celebration that gave rise to the photograph being taken. In addition, we may reflect on the fashion of the day, clothes, hairstyles, and the minutiae captured in an image. These snapshots become the pointers to experiences, which are revived and interpreted.

Surprising nostalgia

Then there are those photographs that just add to the mystery of our history. Robyn Hukin, a Baby Boomer and a keen genealogist living in Perth, Western Australia, had 'lost' a branch of her South Australian family. After hundreds of hours of research, a few trips to Adelaide and searching police and court records, she discovered a hidden truth – there had been prostitutes in the family.

The 'truth' had not been passed on, and from generation to generation the family history was sanitised. Through some diligent research Robyn discovered that her ancestors, Annie Brans with her two sisters Johanna, and Mary

Brockman, had eleven illegitimate children between them. All of these children were taken into state care before they were five years of age[50]. Robyn has photographs from around the time-period (the 1880s) that these members of the family were 'working', but cannot confirm any photographs of the ladies in question. According to Robyn the oral history of the family is partly confirmed as one of the sisters, Johanna, is immortalised by the (Adelaide) West Terrace Cemetery in its commemorative walk-and-talk trail[51]. The brutality of a hidden family history is demonstrated in this instant. The romantic and nostalgic notion of the early Australian settler, forging a new life in colonial times, is shattered by the knowledge of a seedy existence. We can sanitise past lives and make them what we wish, or society's attitudes change and the blame and finger pointing become irrelevant (Martin, P, Hafestad & Diedrick 1988, p. 537; McAdams 2006, p. 87).

Another interviewee, Jeremy, had a cousin who had recently visited him from the United Kingdom. The cousin brought with him a box of CDs filled with scanned images. The original photographs were discovered, literally in an old suitcase, in the roof space of the cousin's long-time family home, near London. They had been left there, untouched since the 1960s. Many of the photographs were of the Australian branch of the family. Jeremy recounted what his cousin had told him, that also stored in the suitcase were: 'newsy letters, birthday cards, and Xmas cards sent "back home" from Sydney'. Accompanying the discs of digitised photographs were scans of the letters and cards. It was a comprehensive collection depicting a history of the family from post-war England to the 1970s in Australia.

Jeremy viewed images of his parents, siblings, cousins, other family members, and of himself, that he did not know existed. It appears that if duplicates were ever made when the black-and-white prints were developed, none survived. The original images were posted with letters and cards, from Australia to England. The negatives had long been lost.

50 *The three sisters resided at Fletcher Road, Semaphore, within walking distance to the wharfs at Port Adelaide. All died in their early thirties from tuberculosis. Details used with permission and confirmed in a personal email from Robyn Hukin, dated April 21, 2013.*

51 *The history of West Terrace Cemetery can be discovered on one of the regular guided walking tours or by following the self-guided Heritage Highlights interpretive trail – Plan 3, Path 13, Plot 30.*
http://www.aca.sa.gov.au/Ourcemeteries/WestTerraceCemetery.aspx

By the early 1950s, the sending of 'likenesses[52]' of Australia 'back home' to England had been a practice for over a century. Australian photographers from the mid-1800s used their photographs to show life in this unique country. With the popularity of portrait photography and the gradual increase in the use of privately owned cameras, photographs became a means of augmenting letter writing with family and friends in England (Newton et al. 1988, p. 31; Robinson, J 2007, p. 24; Thomson 2011b, pp. 243-294).

One photograph that holds Jeremy's particular interest is of himself and the visiting cousin as young boys. It is rich with history, culture, nostalgia and happy memories. Jeremy deduced that it had been taken after the Second World War, possibly 1951, or 1952, somewhere on the east coast of England, prior to him immigrating to Australia with his parents. The cousins remembered the holiday, but not the photograph of them together. With the aid of computer scanning they zoomed in, magnifying the image and re-discovered the deprivation of living in post-war England. The background was the shop-front window of a grocery store. The display of goods in the window was small and plain. Hand written cards depicted the prices, and how many of the items were in stock. In one case there was only a plain brown paper bag with the price of a pound of flour written on it in chalk. The bag was empty. In the photograph, they stood side-by-side, wearing cast-off clothes with newspapers stuffed under their jumpers, just to keep warm. Such was life then under the continuing and draconian post-war rationing. Jeremy explained:

> It is interesting having the digital pictures from my cousin in the UK, looking at them. The memories, even the people I only know through family chats; the oral history is now real.

Jeremy wishes to maintain his privacy and declined to provide me with any images[53].

52 *Also see Chapter Six, Photographic autoethnography – Oral history – Early family holidays, footnote 91 p. 239 where 'likenesses' are discussed.*

53 *Subsequently, I discovered that Jeremy is planning to write his life story and did not want to have any of his photographs made public prior to publishing. However, he did not have concerns on using his story in this thesis, as long as his identity was not disclosed.*

Intrusion into birth, life and death

In analysing the data I realised that more than half of those interviewed mentioned the relationship between family photography and what is considered socially acceptable behaviour. Photography does not strictly conform to the human life cycle of birth and death. While a photograph is created (born), it does not necessarily die, unlike the person who took it or those persons who have had their images captured. The photograph can survive. Therefore an aspect of this research considers these 'living' photographs and the legacy they represent. At this point it is appropriate to explore the relationship between the photograph, and birth and death. Sontag describes it thus: 'All photographs are *memento mori*. To take a photograph is to participate in another person's (or thing's) mortality, vulnerability, mutability' (1977, p. 15). She succinctly encapsulates the essence of family photography, defining it as a memory that captures the life, issues and changes, through evolution and time. A question that needs addressing is whether the taking of a photograph of a person (or a thing) perpetuates their mortality or acts in their resurrection? The photograph has created a spot of time, a moment that can never be changed, interpreted yes, but not changed.

Capturing the birth

At the beginning of life, it appears that photographing this family-creating event is becoming more common. Most of the mothers who were interviewed mentioned what they saw as a growing convention of photographing the various stages of pregnancy. Those with grandchildren accepted that with the 'net generation' much of the pregnancy is photographed and images of ultrasound scans are fixed to refrigerator doors, shown to friends and relatives and uploaded to Facebook®. While discussing 'naughty snaps' Carol smiled as she revealed:

> We've got some nudes around that time [pregnant with her son], but they are kinda put away … but he [husband Marc] didn't take any pic of the birth, thank goodness.

However, this is not always the case and the practice of photographing the delivery is becoming more common. In these incidents the father[54] happily snaps away in awe of the pending birth. The mother – in confinement – is arguably in the most vulnerable situation in her life. She has no control over her body, or the minions of medical staff directing her every moment, imploring her to breathe, relax, push, and enjoy simultaneously. The camera snaps away.

What of these images? Who sees them? Why is a photograph of the baby emerging from the birth canal necessary for the family collection? Responses from the fathers I interviewed suggest the moment was captured for the mother (ostensibly to view at a later date), or that it seemed important at the time. According to interviewee Bill, he wanted a record of the birth of their first child:

> Oh I wanted to record everything, it was so exciting, but that was for [first-born], the others I did shots once they were born with their mum, but not the birth those times. I've looked [at them] a few times, but no one else has.

As for the mothers, their retort has suggested that there was an aspect of not fully taking in what was happening around them, and most have not looked at these quite personal photographs more than once or twice since. Wendy, in her interview, stated that she wanted a record of the births, but now that she is divorced from the father, these images do not hold the same attraction:

> I've got them still but their dad is not around so I don't look [at them] any more.

These images are not recorded in the family album, but are concealed at the back of a draw in the bedroom, or well hidden in a folder buried in the computer. Compare that scenario with the picture of the recently born child, snuggled against its mother's breast.

Which image is culturally more acceptable to retain and form part of the legacy for future generations to view? I realise that in some cultures or even some families neither image would be acceptable. Barthes refers to this as good taste: 'a servant shared by ethics and aesthetics' (2004 (trans), p. 8). It is only in the Baby Boomer's lifetime that it became acceptable for the father to be present during the birth, and that family photography extended to the delivery

54 *While I have used 'father' in this scenario, I accept that such photographs are not exclusively in the paternal domain.*

room (photo 11). The event is photographed, capturing the excitement, drama, and wonderment of birth. These images can show the delicacy of the first moments of life and the radiant happiness of the new mother, thus becoming prized mementos. Cultural change evolves over time and earlier taboos become accepted (Ellis 2002; Pickering 2008; Pickering & Keightley 2006).

Mainstream media over the past decade have reported on parents photographing or organising photographs to be taken during labour (Black 2012, p. 9)[55]. No longer is giving birth the private domain of the mother and medical staff, as it has been historically, with the newborn only displayed when wrapped in the sterile surroundings of the hospital nursery; the Baby Boomer has been there with the camera (Wallis 2013).



Photo 11 *The delivery room is a private enclave, but made semi-public through the camera. Taken January 1979.*

Recording the diary of life

While there are single photographs that draw on nostalgic memories, another participant's perspective is shown in her description of her collection of family photographs as 'a diary of your life'. Pauline displays her emotion over those special images and acknowledges the nostalgia and importance of the photo album to her. This realisation became apparent whilst visiting her 80-year-old

55 *The Adelaide Sunday Mail (July 15, 2012), reported on the growing trend of families either taking their own photographs or hiring a professional photographer to record all aspects of the confinement. Similarly there are some instances where parents share the birthing experience on Facebook; it is not common, but a growing trend. A similar article in the SA Weekend magazine liftout to the Adelaide Advertiser, October 11, 2014, p. 23 reports on local professional photographer Victoria Berekmeri, who has photographed fifty births.* www.berekmeriphotography.com

aunt living on Yorke Peninsula, in South Australia. It was a small family gathering and she had been looking at some of the old photographs when another family member joined her and commented: 'Aren't these old photos beautiful, even though I don't know who they are?' In the interview Pauline wistfully reflected:

> You look at the photographs that you've taken, and they bring back memories to you. So nostalgic. But those photographs aren't going to give your children any memories, so are you going to write stories around them?

With this comment, Pauline succinctly outlines the opportunity for all families who wish to pass on something of their lives and past.

One argument that I am expounding in this thesis is that Baby Boomers can look to their collections of photographs in old albums, shoeboxes, or at the back of the wardrobe to recognise the beauty, value, and depth of history they hold. In reflecting on the interviews with the research group there is a general consensus that there is some value with their individual collections. This is the underpinning of photographic autoethnography. However, not everyone is interested in the past. At times the worth of family history or genealogical research is questioned (Bishop, R 2005). Yet how often are family history custodians called upon to provide some background on the family, settle a debate, or provide information about the 'olden days' – as highlighted in the Prologue to this thesis? Children, grandchildren, nieces, and nephews seek out information for school projects (Pershkin 1997; Prosser 1992; Whitman 2011). Other family members may want a photograph depicting a time past, or to provide a new interpretation of their oral history (Thomson 2011a, p. 172).

Consider how the splendour and profundity of the photograph would be enhanced if there was the supporting story to go with the image. A few words can be written, or a story told, but how will this history be remembered, and what about the other hundreds of photographs in albums, drawers and shoeboxes in the home of Baby Boomers throughout Australia? Even if an individual has no interest in, or does not see any value in, their collection of photographs, will they be left to a 'pot-luck' future?

Attesting to the different experiences in peoples' lives, interviewee Paul spoke with admiration of his father and the difficult times he had in running a business where debtors did not pay their bills. There were no photographs of that period in his life and with mounting debts food was scarce. Often he claimed: 'I was lucky to get a bit of bread with dripping'. This passing comment provoked a nostalgic memory for me. My after-school treat was to break open a double loaf of fluffy, warm bread. The local Opie's Bakery[56] offered two daily orders of freshly baked bread, delivered from a horse-drawn cart. The 'baker' would have a large wicker basket to carry the bread to the back door of our home. When my mother was not at home, I would pick at the cloud like tufts from the still warm loaves. With a thick slice of bread, liberally spread with dripping, pure fat from the Sunday roasts, sprinkled with a good helping of salt, I would sit on the wall of the front veranda and hoe into this after-school treat (photo 51). In the exchanges of our stories we chuckled over how I saw bread and dripping as a delight, and he saw it as the final step before starvation. This was another example of the bruising connections where I was regularly being drawn into the participants' stories and how the narrative enhances the value of the photograph.

One couple being interviewed, Paul and Mary, were amazed when they realised how many photographs they had accumulated over the years, although for them it is a pleasurable challenge to reorganise their assortment and tell their evolving stories. In a practical sense, whenever they look through an album or come across a photograph that renews their memories, they write something on the back of the image, or about it – more than just a date and people's names. Paul and Mary include something of the circumstances and details of the artefacts in the photograph as well. Many of their family photographs are scanned and stored electronically in a computer and backed up on discs. This, they suggest, has made the recording of stories and other important information significantly easier.

The data from the research support my casual observations over time that many individuals have plans to 'fix up' their collections. Comments made during

56 *The Opie Bakery was a family owned business in Unley, South Australia and operated until the 1960s. The building housing the bakery was demolished in 1983.*

interviews suggest people want to organise their albums, or digital images, and add stories, or at the very least provide dates and names. But it is something to do later, when they retire or when the children take an interest. While the photographs and their stories are important, time, priorities, and the pressure of life push the recording of their history into the background (Hirsch, J 1981, p. 45). There are those moments when something spurs a family member into action. Imagining her photographs starting to breed under the bed, Janet decided that:

> I would try and divvy up[57] some for each kid … but it is an emotional kind of journey every time I open up that box.

Consequently, the progress has been slow and it is one of those 'things' that will get completed one day. With ownership of these artefacts there is an emotional attachment, and while it is difficult to 'carve up the collection' it will happen in time. Yet Janet's husband is happy to leave it to their children to work through after he and his wife are dead. Others interviewed were of a similar opinion, but there is still a desire by them to have some control over the ultimate future of these collections.

Not every photograph is remarkable or important. Nevertheless, from innocuous encounters previously forgotten histories can be rediscovered. Publishing her first book, Helen Blake, (a Baby Boomer) has documented the biography of the early (1930s) South Australian aviator Jimmy Melrose[58]. Three years of research and writing started with the discovery of a small and well-preserved photograph of the young pilot. It was amongst her grandfather's collection of photographs depicting life in the mid-north of South Australia (Harris, Samela 2009, p. 15)[59]. In a recent email exchange[60] I had with Helen she wrote:

> I am old enough to remember about half of my grandmother's 12 siblings so could recognize their faces along with others. There was an 'odd' face though of a very handsome blonde young man beside a plane. He was also beautifully dressed. Our family were farmers so I was fairly sure he wasn't one of us! I took it to my father and asked him. That was the first I heard of Jimmy Melrose.

57 *'Divvy up' is an Australian colloquial term meaning to divide something into shares.*
58 *Published as Boy Phoenix –* http://www.jimmymelrose.com/
59 *Samela Harris is a former journalist and contributor to the Adelaide Advertiser newspaper,*
60 *Email correspondence dated September 21 and 22, 2014 – held in personal records.*

This was the beginning of a quest that she describes as: ‘being quite an adventure in my life’.

Funeral rites

In the interviews I did not specifically enquire about death within their family as this can be an emotive and for some a traumatic memory. However, if the participant’s eventual death was mentioned or they raised the death of a family member I gently probed for further information. Of their own death, it was generally in the context of their children inheriting their possessions. Not one participant talked of recording a death photographically although most had photographs of the graves of ancestors. In each instance the participant refocused the interview to more comfortable subjects. Similar to other occasions when the interviewees introduced stories or photographs I would be drawn to my own memories and bitter-sweet nostalgia.

In April 1982 a serving member (and Baby Boomer) of the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) died and a ‘full-service ceremonial’ funeral was held in his honour. Katumato Kakihisa, a Japanese fire officer, was participating in an inter-government-sponsored tour of Australian Fire Services, and as an officer in the MFS[61], I was his mentor in Adelaide. Katumato attended the funeral service, and as the uniformed fire service personnel carried the coffin into the funeral parlour for the memorial service he produced a camera and commenced taking photographs. There was an immediate reaction and anger shown by the pallbearers and others in the vicinity. I, too, was a little uncomfortable with the camera being used. However, it was the strong and universal negative and almost hostile reaction by others in attendance that surprised me.

Neither the camera nor the visiting guest was being overly intrusive or obstructing the procession. Katumato was just part of the crowd. Speaking with a number of the fire fighters afterwards, their anger appeared to be a combination of embarrassment of their reaction to a solemn and emotional time, being recorded and then to be seen by others (at a later stage), and intrusion

61 *See Chapter Two, A focus on methodology – A participant’s autoethnography.*

into a private world of grief. However, this was only part of the issue. The concern of Katumato was evident as he realised that he had made an unwitting mistake, a cultural *faux pas*. In his eyes the taking of a photograph of this sombre moment was showing deep respect and honour not only to the deceased, but also to those attending the funeral (Gibson, 2008). Even so, the explanation and an apology to a male-dominated, traditional and paramilitary organisation was only begrudgingly accepted. This was the first cultural impasse through photography that I had experienced. I have never forgotten the incident, but it continues to influence my approach to photography in the intervening decades, as an ethnographer and autoethnographer, and in this research project in particular.

Later that evening, as I watched the television news at home, I reflected on a certain irony as aspects of the funeral were shown as a significant news event. While digital photography may have made the twenty-first century photojournalist's tasks faster and easier, the image has been fundamental to the journalistic story for more than one hundred years. Barbie Zelizer, (2005, pp. 170, 171) a Professor of Communication and former journalist, states that the public make assumptions regarding disasters and death. They see the image as a means of understanding the drama being reported and the notion of making the event more manageable. The media have a licence to intrude. The firefighters I worked with never questioned the issue of the media filming the ceremony. Actually it was quite the opposite. The day following the funeral, the talk in the mess at the Wakefield Street headquarters was how it was good to see the media reporting on the death of their colleague. The consensus from the firefighters was that the media coverage showed respect for the work 'firies' did and the deceased in particular.

Most of the interviewees had photographs of family members who had served in one, or both of the world wars. Only three participants had detailed narratives of the war service of their family member to combine with the photographs. Recently, looking through a photo album of my mother's, I almost missed two nearly identical photographs (photo 12). Both were of the same grave, but one had my father, in his Army uniform, standing alongside the memorial. I

wondered why? It brought back childhood memories of a story my father told to his 'army mates' when they sat around our kitchen table, drank beer and swapped wartime experiences.

On reflection this photograph had a number of *punctum* and nostalgic moments for me. The first was seeing my now deceased father in uniform standing reverently at this graveside. Then there was the Asian script on the headstone plus, what at first I considered a bit of odd Australian humour, the two beer bottles on the grave. Also there was the incongruity of an Asian grave in the isolated Australian outback. Carefully lifting the small photograph from the adhesive page of the album I was disappointed that nothing was written on the back. However, under the second image I found the following written in my father's handwriting:



Photo 12 *My father at the grave of Yip Yau, who worked at an army camp near Alice Springs. c. 1943*

> Chinese Grave near Alice [Springs][62] Chinese custom to put food on grave 2 bottles beer 2 bottles milk 1 pork chop 1 piece bacon 3 oranges 1 candle.

These few words written by my father more than seventy years ago gave me a burst of comforting warm memories. As young boy I would curl up on the wood-box in our kitchen next to the wood burning stove and listen to him and his friends swap stories. I knew if I sat quietly I would be ignored. My memory recalls Yip Yau being described as a Chinese immigrant who, at the outbreak of war in 1939, was living in Alice Springs. It is obvious that my father visited this grave with at least one another person, the photographer. Why were these two photographs taken and why did my father keep them in an album when many of his other 'war-time' photographs were stored, literally, in a shoebox? Never

62 *Alice Springs is a remote outback town in Central Australia.*

having the opportunity to ask him about these two pictures I have recently attempted to discover who Yip Yau was without success.

After my mother died I discovered, amongst her papers and photographs, a picture of a grave covered in floral tributes (photo 13). In her handwriting, in pencil on the back of this colour photograph, my mother had written: 'Cath's grave, Whyalla'[63]. No date and no other details. It is the grave of my aunt, my mother's sister-in-law. I was able to discover that she had died in October 1970. Whether my mother attended the funeral, or not, I am unsure, as I was living in New Guinea at the time. My mother did not have a camera so the photograph was given to her. Why she found it of importance to have and keep was never mentioned.



Photo 13 *My aunt's grave at Whyalla. My mother had this photograph amongst her collection when she died. October 1970.*

Attending funerals in the past fifteen years I have noticed that it is becoming a more common occurrence to display a selection of artefacts, including photographs at these services in Australia. Often the photographs are selected by the deceased before death, and depict various stages of their life. This photographic memoir can be explained as a gift to those gathered to celebrate the former life. These 'particular moments in time' allow people, the viewer(s) of the photograph to do more than just have the person's life illustrated, they provide the means for that life to be interpreted (Duff 1981, p. 75). Talking about the funeral of a family member that she had recently attended, interviewee Sue observed:

> The photographs of Nin's [the deceased] life fascinated me. I learnt so much about her I didn't know. It is strange though, I think I know her better now. Maybe I should have looked at her photos before she died.

63 *Whyalla is a coastal city approximately four-hours drive north of Adelaide. It is an industrial centre for steel works and ship-building.*

Others liken the photograph to have a relationship with resurrection (Barthes 2000 (trans), p. 82). This interpretation will vary depending on the person's relationship with the deceased, their shared experiences, religious and cultural understanding. This relationship is not just confined to the viewing of photographs of deceased persons, but can be applied in all other circumstances of reading a photographic text. However, in the more solemn moments of a death, there is reluctance, an unspoken protocol, not to photograph the funeral or those present. For about thirty years, until about 1880, post-mortem photographs were taken by professional photographers (Gillis 1996, pp. 207-209; Holland 2004, p. 132). To photograph the deceased lying in the coffin in contemporary Australian society is almost unacceptable. Now with the growing passion to photograph the minutiae of life and show the results almost instantly on social media, I wonder how long it will be before there is a return to capturing that final image – even the moment of death?

Of those I interviewed there were photographs of now dead relatives and friends in their collections. Occasionally a baby or child who had died in infancy was in a frame and displayed amongst other photographs in the home. Some had photographs of parents or other ancestors for public display as well. These were the silent reminders of those who had died, even if the interviewee had never personally known them. Janet's experiences were slightly different as she is a nursing sister specialising in neonatal intensive care of premature babies. As Janet explains in our interview, often these babies do not survive, yet the parents are thankful for what the medical staff had done for them and their families:

> I have been given photos as a gift, so I've kept those, but I wouldn't be able to tell you any one of those children's names.

The camera violates the privacy of bereavement, both before and after death, and shows that death is just an apparition (Barthes 2000 (trans), p. 15). The photograph is the means of resurrection. Barthes suggests that the very act of taking a photograph creates an impression, a belief that the deceased continues to live through reconstruction (2000 (trans), p. 79). None of the participants in the research describe photographs of deceased friends or family members in similar terms. There is an acceptance – evident from the research

– that these photographs are a prompt to memory, a reminder of what once was.

A memory of Neil

There are moments when a photograph triggers a memory, restarts a quest of discovery, or poses a mystery. At other times it is a passing comment that makes an ordinary photograph valued, and inundates our recollections with fondness, or the bitter-sweetness of nostalgia. 'A memory of Neil' is one of those stories.

Earlier in this chapter I related the experience of being the non-participating observer when Valmai had opened up her storage box of old photographs and discussed them with her Baby Boomer sister and daughter. On the following occasion I participated in the discussions yet was aware of my dual role of being a participant observer in this research (Lindlof & Taylor 2011; 2002). The undercurrent in this narrative perpetuates some darker or bittersweet nostalgic memories for me.

While having dinner with friends (all Baby Boomers) at the Royal Hotel on Hackney Road, Adelaide, I was particularly taken by the six dozen or so beautiful black-and-white photographic images of colonial South Australia on display throughout the hotel. Only two people other than myself from our group of six took any time to look at them, but as the evening progressed, the display was commented on occasionally. Often dinner conversations turn to career experiences and the people with whom individuals worked.

Neil is about four years older than me. He lived with his parents and younger brother and sister, three houses away from where I grew up in the 1950s[64]. Our families were close and we neighbourhood children, in our understanding, lived carefree lives. Neil was for many years the manager of another of our dinner group. Stories about the people in our respective pasts, and early working lives dominated the table talk for some time. The conversation turned then to other

64 *This narrative was first published as an article titled, More than a Catalyst, in the August 2009 edition of The South Australian Genealogist, Volume 36, No 3, pages 16-21. What is addressed in this thesis is a significantly reduced version of the original.*

things, including a few of the photographs displayed on the walls of the hotel dining room.

Later, whilst being driven home, my thoughts drifted back to the conversation that revealed a little of the life of Neil. I had not seen or heard of him for decades. Although Neil and I did not spend time together as teenagers, the evening's conversations still brought back memories, nostalgia, and those perfect childhood days. In the foggy recesses of my memory I knew I had a photograph of Neil somewhere.

The following morning after rummaging through the shelves in the spare bedroom at home, I located my very first photo album (photo 14*).* It was a little dilapidated, and a thought quickly came to mind: is it time to scan the photographs and throw out the old album? Holding it, I felt the texture of the worn and tattered red cover. The gold inlay title, 'Photographs', had faded over the years, and the faint musty aroma did not give adequate counsel as to the treasures it held. This album has sat in bookcases and cupboards in many homes, and in numerous towns throughout Australia, plus a few overseas as well.

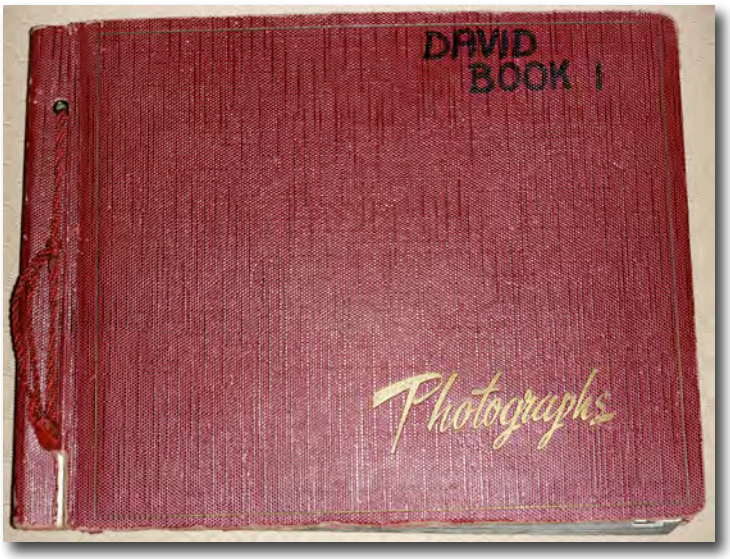

Photo 14 *My original photo album that I started in 1958.*

Recollections of being given it as a Christmas present, of sitting in my bedroom as a young teenager sorting through my photographs and trying to decide what I would display in its pages, amongst other memories spilled into my thoughts. I appreciate that scanning its images and recycling the album through the rubbish would not destroy my memories that are prompted from its contents. Yet, for me this worn and old album has an inalienable value (Gibson 2008, pp. 47-78). I had not looked through it in years, yet I knew it held the one photograph I had of Neil.

Turning the pages of that battered red photo album, each photograph generated flashes of memory, not forgotten moments, but interred in the recesses of my mind. Then on the bottom right of another charcoal grey page of the album was the slightly over-exposed black-and-white photograph of Neil, held in place by the old style photo corners. I had taken it in my parents' lounge room some time in 1960. Bordered by a white edge there was much more to this photograph than I first remembered. My memories surged and I had that contentment of nostalgia (photo 15).



Photo 15 *Neil 'dressed' in his mother's clothes, with Uncle 'Skin' in the lounge room of my family home. I took this picture using my Box Brownie Camera with a 'bulb' flash attachment.*

The photograph showed the mostly forgotten trappings of our home. Besides Neil, there was another person in the frame, someone with whom I had not spoken since my early 20s. He had died whilst I was living overseas. This is my only photograph of 'Skin' Hefford. I never knew his given name, everyone called him Skin, and to me he was 'Uncle Skin'. While I have numerous memories of Uncle Skin, only one came to mind that Saturday morning. On the morning of my wedding, he and I dressed up in suits and he 'shouted' me a beer at the Fountain Inn Hotel. We enjoyed a pony[65] of beer each, topped off

65 *A 'pony' is a glass of 140 ml capacity and a name commonly used in South Australian Hotels. My mother's elder brother, Harold Denton, who was an avid horse race devotee, once explained to me that the name 'pony' came from old horse race carnivals, where patrons would go to the bar for a quick drink of beer between races. As only a short*

with a nip of scotch, and then back home to prepare for the wedding celebrations.

Gazing at that one photograph, the memories full of nostalgia flew in, only to be batted away with another thought, a new remembrance. All this from a single photograph and Neil, who was the catalyst in this journey, became superfluous. I had no memory of why he was dressed in his mother's old clothes; possibly he was going to a fancy dress party. A spot of time over a nice meal with friends transported me to a romanticised moment in my life that is now documented not only for my story, but also for the interest of my children, grandchildren and their families. I wonder about the 'nostalgic and elegiac' memory this photograph might carry for Neil (Hirsch, M 1997, p. 264). Most of those I interviewed have a similar 'first' photo album, which holds photographs recording their life events and at times, the bitter-sweetness of nostalgia. Ann used one of her parents' incomplete albums to start her personal collection of photographs. John stated: 'mine is stuffed on a book-case, I look at it occasionally' and Sue remarked: 'most [of my] photographs in albums are happy, but some bring back sad memories, like, when my cousin and younger sister died – both from breast cancer'. Although none of those in the research group used specific language that differentiated between happy and gloomy, or good and regretful nostalgia, the stories they revealed, the tone of their voice and style of speaking did.

Conclusion

The defining of generations, as discussed in *Chapter One*, I acknowledge is many faceted and in this thesis it has been discussed through a number of scholars (Routledge et al 2012; Davis1997; Edmunds and Turner 2002; Mannheim 1972). Furthermore Gibson (2008, pp. 40-42) discusses various artefacts, the stories they prompt and their handing on to following generations. Similarly, in Chapter Three of this thesis I examine the evolving recollections of Baby Boomers, which are prompted through the collection of family photographs and their associated stories. This relationship between the

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amount of time was available between races many of the 'punters' would prefer to drink beer from the small 140 ml glass so they would finish in time to place a bet, or to get back to the next race. The pony is a small horse not commonly used in racing; nonetheless the name stuck and was a common beer size requested in hotel bars.

photograph, memory and narrative provides an opportunity for an oral and social history to be preserved for the future.

Although the contemporary concept of nostalgic photographs suggests warmness, it is apparent from the discussions with the research participants that not all pictures resurrect happy memories. The family generates intense emotions and strong passions. They are not only of love and concern, but also of pain and conflict (Thio 2007, p. 302). Whilst there is a mood of fondness within these family photo collections, certain images confront memories, and cannot be dismissed. All of those interviewed experienced discord and unhappiness at some time in their lives. It is the stories of Julie, Mervin and Paul that show the raw aspects associated with some of their elegiac moments.

All but two of the interviewees talked of irregular family reminiscences, sitting together, laughing at childhood photographs, and exploring old photo albums. These impromptu events are a gratifying pastime. However, they mean different things to the people involved. For some it is about the photographs and what they deliver, for others it is the peripheral stories that emerge. It links them to their past, often times not shared with those in the immediate group. Each time a photograph is viewed, even by the same person, different recollections are evoked, new stories unfold and new memories are created. Participant Carol often referred to her understanding of nostalgia when describing her feelings about the comfortable past her photographs showed:

> Nostalgia has a lot to do with it, our own photographs in particular; they do bring back wonderful memories. Memory is a funny thing because it can be so transient, and it needs a kind of vision stimulation to sort of bring back the essence of an experience. And so, photographs are important like that.

Whilst at a family gathered to celebrate a birthday, three of the group shared part of the evening looking at old photographs. I did not know the people depicted in the albums or selections of lose photographs, but they stimulated my memory and provided me with my own moment of warm memories. Photographs do that.

I maintain that often the photographs of events in an individual's life become the ancestral signposts that plot the life stories of families. Some pictures may

challenge sensibilities, and provide some tangible evidence of a scandal in the family history, while others open up a treasure chest of lost images and recollections. The interviewees attest that there is an importance in saving the photo collections, their stories and the memories. No matter their origin, they believe that these photographs shape the themes to the familial story. They also provide a foundation to re-remember and create personal relationships with nostalgia.

While popular culture, marketing and common usage continue to modify the understanding of nostalgia, it is now often interpreted as a warm and fond rendition of the past. Thus allowing the difficult, contentious, unhappy, or significantly horrid parts of individual experiences to be glossed over and restructured into an acceptable memory. Nostalgia is not this. Most of the memories raised by the interviewees are positive and none of them referred to, or spoke of, photographs that captured unhappy events in their lives. However, the photographs selected by the interviewees connect their experiences to threads of nostalgia. That is, the family photograph may have recorded celebrations and enjoyable life events, but the memories depicting the bittersweet greyness of nostalgia are often prompted by some of these images.

In the following chapter the notion of photo-induced legacy is examined, interpreted and evaluated. Drawing on the data from the interviews and the earlier discussion on nostalgia, the narratives and oral histories are reviewed and critiqued. The chapter outlines the affiliation between the generations illustrating how the photo-induced narratives, shared within the family, become part of the evolving structure of the clan. However, the narratives provide more than just a legacy, especially one based on photographs. I argue that they are (in part) the endowment of one generation to the next.

> *I'd ask who people were and eventually my mum had the foresight some years ago, probably about ten or fifteen years ago, to get together with Dad's brother, who then was well in his eighties – he died at a hundred, two years ago and he had a brilliant memory – to get together with him and spend quite a few days going through every single photo and writing on the back who they were. How brilliant was that? That was always my complaint – they never used to write on the photo [in the past], because they knew who they were and they didn't realise generations down that other people don't know who they are. When it comes to family history, and leaving photos for future generations, it's really sad I reckon when old photos get chucked out because there's – well, we don't know who they are so let's clean up.*
>
> *Interviewee Pauline*

Earlier in this thesis I raised the issue of the gift of legacy[66]. That discussion points out that while the literature on legacy is wide ranging, there is a lack of reference to, and scholarly debate regarding family photographic collections and the associated stories (Conrad 2003; Freund & Thomson 2011). A comprehensive paper on legacy by Hunter and Rowles (2005), addresses what they argue are three distinct, but interrelated groupings of legacy – biological, material and values. Applying this overview to the family collection of photographs and the stories they prompt, I suggest that the inherited and the (potential) legacy of the Baby Boomers are in part material and in part value-based. However, the narratives become a mix of material – their physical form and expounding values relating to their content, meaning and interpretation.

Legacy, whether it is a deliberate act by giving something as a remembrance, or bequeathed following a person's death, will be acknowledged, interrogated and understood as a future commodity. As that commodity, the legacy will be explained based on the understandings and values held at that time. This evolving narrative and the physical form of that legacy are intertwined discussions in this chapter. One specific interview (Louise Finnane) discusses

66 *See Chapter One, Framing the literature – The gift of legacy.*

her involvement with terminal patients and how she helps them to compile their legacy. While each interviewee and their respective narratives are different, the desire of leaving a legacy became evident during the interviews. Initially the relevance and value of legacy are commented on in some detail, using data from the research participants. Furthermore, in this chapter I acknowledge the parallels between the legacies of those interviewed and the legacy, which I have inherited from my parents and grandparents. The issue of technology in recording a person's legacy cannot be avoided. Consequently technology and the family narrative is acknowledged and discussed from the views of the research participants.

Legacy is a conceptual idea and in this thesis I am employing the story, or at the least a form of story-telling, as the object. Denzin (1992) correctly points out that the narrative and the emotional revelation of lived experience only comes about when the individual is committed and ready to tell their story. Like Carolyn Ellis (1995, p. 316), I also grapple with the chronology of the story, but from a different perspective. She is signalling the changing story through knowledge and telling and re-telling a story over time, and I accept this dilemma. However, in significant aspects of this research project the narratives are recalled or constructed as a result of viewing images. Photographs will not automatically form a pictorial diary driven by time-sequence. Consequently these stories will evolve, traverse time, location, people and events as the photographs are viewed, interpreted and valued for the memories they conjure. The resulting narrative is explained by Denzin (1992, p. 27) as:

> …. life is not lived realistically, in a linear manner. It is lived through the subject's eye, and that eye, like a camera's, is always reflexive, nonlinear, subjective, filled with flashbacks, after-images, dream sequences, faces merging into one another, masks dropping, and new masks being put on.

Nonetheless, I concur that 'each telling affects the teller, which, in turn, affects the next telling' (Ellis 1995, p. 316), no matter its cause. That is, the foundation of leaving a legacy produces a narrative, but it is up to those persons bequeathed that legacy to then tell their (interpretive) story.

Legacy and its impact

As humans, everyone leaves ‘some sort of legacy but how they accomplish this is culture specific’ (Hunter & Rowles 2005, p. 330). Here the argument is not about personal ego or altruism, but about those who are touched by the legacy, and how they will benefit. As I have argued earlier[67], the Baby Boomer is the first generation not only to have the opportunity, but the means to tell their story based on an extensive collection of personal family photographs. Before my parents died they never spoke of their legacy, or what they were intending to pass on to their three children. Their attitude appeared to be that if it was not spoken of then it would delay the inevitable. The few times I raised the subject of ‘legacy’, or whatever terms I may have used at the time, my mother dismissed it. ‘It’s something to think about later, David’, was my mother’s quiet, but programmed response.

After her funeral, when my two sisters went through our mother’s belongings and those of our father, which my mother had kept, they discovered that she had ‘branded’ many of her remaining possessions with the name of whom she wished to have that particular item. These items seemed to be distributed amongst the three of us, and as Gibson describes it, based on the stories associated with the particular object (2008 pp. 41-42). Unbeknown to the family our mother had, in her way, provided a material legacy through her possessions. While she ‘gifted’ various objects, such as furniture, vases, hand-made embroidery and the like, her accumulation of photographs were left in the sideboard drawer, seemingly forgotten.

The Baby Boomers in the interviews highlight how they are looking at their own collections of family photographs and using them as a storyboard to bequeath their narratives, chronicles, and anecdotes to their children, and those who follow. Julie has an interest in social and cultural history as well as family history and commented:

67 *See the Prologue and Chapter One.*

> There may be something in there that's useful to him [her son] and that really would make me pleased, and maybe to his children, or to a relative – somebody who might get something out of the collection; I think that'd be fine.

However, it is not just about her legacy. Julie sees her collection of photographs heart-warming in the present as well:

> Yes I would, I'd like to leave a legacy, but I'm also enjoying it now. I like to have it. It gives me my own research too. I can go back and think about something, or look at something and say, ok, that was there, right, ok. So, it's useful as a guide for me, like a map is.

For Julie her legacy is more than just the photographs. Whilst she has: 'filled the house now with old photos of my parents and me', she values these old themes and the stories: 'and so the photos become part of that story'. She showed a deep-seated connection with her photographs. Many were on display throughout her home and those in albums were annotated in neat cursive writing. However, Julie similarly to others interviewed did not clearly articulate why she wished to have this legacy.

While most people recognise the need for a will and the legal requirements to have their property disposed of to their wishes, often the smaller items are left 'intestate'. Julie had not given the disposal of her photographic collection much thought as she only had one child, a son, and everything would go to him. Whether there is only one recipient of a legacy or it is shared – divided amongst a number of family members, trust is an acknowledged condition. Trust to preserve the legacy, even trust to pass it on at some stage in the future.

During his interview, Don, a Baby Boomer in his late fifties, recalled a childhood moment when his father took his photograph. What prompted this memory was a random look through an old photo album left to him by his parents. He came across the photograph of an early morning scene when he was going fishing with his father (photo 16). It was taken more than fifty years ago at his grandparents' home, from the bank overlooking the River Murray:

> Dad was behind me on the track, and I heard him pause. I asked him what he was doing but he just told me to 'keep going, keep walking'. That's when I heard the click of the camera.

Don indicated that he loves this image and claims that the photograph helps him recall:

> … the sense of adventure as I began the day. I remember how cold it was, and in my mind I see the stillness of the water.

Just glancing at the photograph, Don declares that he gets a sense of how fresh the air was that chilly morning. He can, he claims: '[still] hear the magpies warbling'. For Don it was a special time as he was going fishing with his father and just glancing at that photograph every detail of that morning is 'etched into my memory'. From Don's perspective he believes that his father planned that photograph, or certainly intended to take a picture of him:

> He wanted to remember this moment when we were together. He wanted this memory to last and it has.

Besides the immediate feelings of happiness it gives him in reliving this special occasion, it also gives Don recollections of memorable family occasions at the farm. That simple snapshot is an important legacy from Don's father that has spanned fifty years and will continue into the next generation of his family. Yet the legacy for Don's children and grandchildren is unknown. Even if it survives time, we cannot determine if or how they will view this photograph, or what understanding they will derive from it. It is probable – because he has told and re-told the story – that Don's immediate descendants will know of this early morning adventure.



Photo 16 *Don, six years old, about to go early morning fishing in the River Murray, c. 1963. Used with permission*

In the future, people's interest at seeing this photograph may include the opportunity to 'go fishing', the clothes being worn, or the opportunity to have access to a body of water for private use. While this consideration is

speculative, it is suggested that 'narratives are on the move' and how the narrative is structured today, for the future, will affect how in the future we will interpret the past (Squire 2012, p. 71). Here the discussion is for the narrative to be understood in 'context'. Yet that context changes over time, through interpretation and opinion. Consequently I argue that the future value on this image and story – and others from Baby Boomers – is still to be discovered.

The act of leaving a legacy also has a therapeutic value. Louise Finnane[68] is an 81-year-old who accepts that: 'death is a part of life; we need to celebrate life and we don't do it enough'. Louise is the leader of a group of volunteer 'biographers' at The Calvary Hospice in North Adelaide who interview and then write up the stories of palliative care patients. When I spoke with Louise the group had completed more than one-hundred and sixty biographies since commencing this service in 2008. The patients' stories are recorded and are later presented to them in book form and also on a CD-Rom. In the main, the families of the patients are grateful for this record and legacy. Some, however, seem to misunderstand the value of these narratives and are quite pedantic over the poor grammar used in the spoken word, or where they may have a different understanding of the facts. However, Louise emphasises that it is the patient's story not anyone else's. Interestingly, Louise also noted that with the biographers:

> In these stories they are recording and writing up, sometimes it touches an experience they have had.

Louise's observation supports my own encounters in interviewing others and as I have stated earlier, this bruising connection is the foundation to the autoethnographic research in this thesis. As researchers we cannot be completely disassociated from those being researched (Richardson, 2000; Pink 2009).

While this community service and the resulting stories are not specifically about Baby Boomers, Louise stated that the final act of life in wanting to leave a story and a legacy is a common theme with the palliative care patients that she meets. Louise noted that, almost in every case, the Baby Boomers who

68 *Titled* 'Keeping life's memories alive*, an article by journalist Amelia Broadstock reported on Louise and her group of volunteer 'biographers' in the Adelaide Advertiser, July 8, 2013, page 3.*

participated in the biography program, in addition to their personal life story and legacy, have a comprehensive collection of family photographs to support their narrative. In one case, a brother and sister lived all their lives on a farm in the south-east of South Australia. Born in the late 1940s and early 1950s, neither married, nor did they have any surviving family. The brother was dying of cancer, but he wanted their story to be recorded even though he had not considered to whom he would leave the bequest. A number of photographs were provided as well. Their neighbour, hearing of the brother talking about his life, asked for the story. As Louise described it:

> The neighbour said he'd like to have [the person's] story. He said it is something precious for the area. Even with no one to leave it to, telling your story at the end of your life is a therapeutic thing to do and it is part of the healing process for those left behind.

While permission was requested (and given) for this specific oral history to be shared, either directly or by implication, in the local community it is not a matter that is often considered when researching family-based histories. Most research participants had either not considered that probability, or assumed that it would not be of interest to people outside the immediate family. On this point, interview participant Ann commented: 'well, I guess it will be with me until the day I die and the kids decide what they're gonna keep and not keep'. An aspect of providing a legacy is having a plan on how it will eventuate and it provides a sense of empowerment for the individual as well (Otis-Green 2003, p. 396). Good research practices and ethical standards are part of the management process of oral history recording and 'an oral history is de facto a kind of public history' (Shopes 2006, p. 268).

Vestiges of control

How the archiving of a life is accomplished will vary between individuals and can be inspired by photographs and the stories around them – photographic autoethnography. There are of course, those in the wider population, who do not care about and have little interest in preserving their past for future generations. This research and my ethnographic observations suggest that some people have a cavalier attitude to the future of their possessions. Peter,

the husband of interviewee Pauline, has little interest as to what will happen to their photographs in the future. His 'no care attitude' to leaving a legacy became apparent to me during our interview.

Yet, in contrast Pauline not only is becoming the family historian, she is creating photo-stories[69] of the family for her two children as they reach milestone birthdays. She spends hours of her time selecting what she considers important photographs. Then the anecdotes and stories are linked to each of the images. While these special family publications are about the respective daughter or son, Pauline is constructing the narrative. As the mother, she is framing and interpreting aspects of her family's and her children's lives. In contrast to Pauline, participant John is happy for their family collection of photographs to be 'dumped in a box for someone to sort through after they are dead.' Mary in discussing her and her husband's photographic legacy stated: 'We'll just keep these [indicating a small collection of photographs] and we'll toss the rest. Hopefully, they'll [their three children] keep them.'

Others interviewed provide a particular structure to their records and a small number are diligent in the documentation of their experiences and life. None of those I interviewed were dying, or at least no one showed any indication of having to face their own death in the immediate future. Yet it was the unspoken reminder that preparing their legacy invoked this inevitability (Ellis 1995, pp. 135-137). No matter the method or the contents of the collection, these records cannot be an objective account. Indeed the stories from the photographs (or other physical record) and the oral histories of the Baby Boomers are personal interpretations coupled with bias, lies, faulty memory and recreated memory. As such they are an individual's, or a family's, narrative with myth and the stories that are passed from generation to generation (Popkin 2010, p. 174).

In analysing the interviews I was able to determine that the research participants were aware that in creating their legacy now or in their lifetime it allows them to manage and have some control over how they are perceived in

69 *In Pauline's case she is creating photo stories of family images for her two children. Some of the photographs are of ancestors, but most are of her and Peter's children over their respective lives. Adjacent to each photograph she is writing a short story or anecdote about the photograph. Pauline is trying to be conservative in the number of photographs included in the 'album' but is complaining that the editing to just too difficult – she wants to include all of them.*

the future. Similarly it is understood by those interviewed that future generations will interpret and make their own determination as to the value and worth of any family photographic anthologies available to them. Other family/cultural researchers looking at the control, power and legacy effects argue along similar lines (Hunter & Rowles 2005; Marcouz 2001). Objectivity in recording and representation of the self and family history is a continuing discussion in ethnographic and autoethnographic research (Johnson, R et al. 2004; Lincoln & Guba 1985). Similarly Wall (2008, p. 47) notes:

> Personal research methods, such as autoethnography, are that much more marginalized because of their emphasis on the researcher's self as subject.

Although Pauline (above) and others in preparing stories about their children are being family historians, they are also, I argue, photographic autoethnographers where there is a level of critical analysis shown. While it is an individual's point of view and not one of vanity, insensitivity, or self-absorption which is being recorded, care should be taken to engage with the 'broader story' and respect how others involved may reflect on the narrative (Ellis 2004, p. 287).

During the interview with Wendy, I discovered that she had given some considerable thought to not only what she would leave for her children, but who would be the custodian of what has been passed on from her, and eventually her own story:

> Now I'd like somebody in the family to become custodian after me. The person I think will become custodian, at least of my side of the family, I think what'll happen is, possibly [her partner – not the father of her children] and I will make two of our children custodians, and they'll be the boys. One will be [named her son], who's the eldest … he's the one who's into family stuff and family history.

It was a common occurrence throughout her interview that Wendy would jump to various memories as they occurred in her thoughts. That then became what she immediately talked about. Quickly, without completing her first story, she would move on to the next point in her narrative, which became the current re-remembered event in her life. Her story lacked a structure. Often I was unable to clearly understand, or follow her apparent random accounts.

This was a challenging interview, not only to conduct, but also later to review and analyse. Some fifteen minutes into our interview, without any prompting from me, Wendy stated:

> My intention is actually to write a book, to try and interweave my life stuff more with the big picture of political and sort of cultural changes going on in the world. Not to write it in that sort of icky personal way, but something a bit bigger. I kind of have this obsession that I'd like to have one document – so – a book with photographs.

Unlike the others I interviewed, Wendy is taking a wider, possibly a global, view of her life and wanting to overlay the cultural and political events of her time against the narrative she tells. No other person I interviewed considered their life and their story from this perspective. Most did acknowledge general or even local history, cultural and social changes of their day at some point in their interview. One example of the (Adelaide) Baby Boomers' cultural memory and a popular event that many of those interviewed have passed on to their children was what they did on Friday June 12, 1964 – more than fifty years ago. The music band 'The Beatles' came to Adelaide. Whether it was listening to the radio broadcast, seeing black-and-white images of the 'Fab Four' on television, schoolyard excitement, or being amongst the crowds at various vantage points around the city, they remember[70]. What was a new wave of entertainment and a cultural experience has, half a century later, become an historic event that some in this generation experienced (Thomson 2011b, p. 252). For many Baby Boomers, whether they personally experienced the Beatles' music and tour or not, this is now part of their oral history and their legacy.

Interviewee Mervin arguably summed up the consensus of the other interviewees on their experience of history, stating:

> That's all the history – that's the way it was back then; that is what I lived in – I want my kids to know about it too.

Whether an individual claims that legacy is about leaving something of ourselves, never being forgotten, or a yearning to add to history it becomes linked to a number of discussions about cultural immortality which is explained

70 *Whilst 'The Beatles' came to Adelaide, the drummer, Ringo Starr, did not tour due to suffering from tonsillitis. A substitute drummer, Jimmy Nicol, performed with the band for the two performances in Centennial Hall, at the Wayville Showgrounds. More than 300,000 people lined the streets from the Adelaide airport to the city to welcome the Beatles – half the population of Adelaide in 1964.*

as the desire to leave something of ourselves behind (Becker, E 1973; McAdams 1993b, pp. 226-227). It is claimed by McGill (2009, p. 133) that this is somewhat of a paradox and expressed through desire by Baby Boomers to package their private lives. These stories are left to an uncertain future of scrutiny and proffer a framed view of a spot in time.

Legacies of others

From the research group, each of these Baby Boomers' narratives are different – often similar, but always different. Consequently the legacies are not the same. In a personal revelation about making sense of herself, Masson (2005, p. 51) discusses her 'devouring curiosity' about the other – other people, other lives and other photographs. She writes of spending hours of her childhood looking at family photographs and imagining the 'other' lives of those depicted in the albums. Throughout my research I am constantly reminded of these others. Nevertheless, this links to how my experiences, either through the articles I read, or the stories my interviewees share with me, have a communal sameness about them.

Marc and Carol's story[71] of Marc's unknown biological father was about family secrets and lies. With my family there was a secret interracial affair that resulted in a pregnancy that was hidden and lied about for seventy years. For Wendy, she became astounded at all the secrets that she continues to discover in her family background. It is her desire to:

> Get out the secrets; I want everything to be exposed. I want the [her] children to have a really clear and deep understanding of what their background is and their forebears have done, and that's why my story will gotten written originally, for them. [sic]

Analysing the data from my research group, Baby Boomers do not appear to have an established view on openness to tell a true[72] (warts and all) family history before it is lost, although the submissive need for secrecy on the imperfect lives of our parents, ancestors, or ourselves appears not to be so imperative in the twenty-first century as it has been in the past. Amongst those

71 *See Chapter Three, Genealogy and memories, A secret no more – Marc and Carol.*
72 *The matter of truth is explored in Chapter Two, A focus on methodology – a photographic truth.*

interviewed there is still some debate as to whether telling the whole truth is the right option. However, 'the interview provides the opportunity to tell her own story in her own terms' (Anderson, K & Jack 2006, p. 129). If there are secrets or lies in the past, should they be part of the legacy passed on to the next generation and if not, does this make the legacy invalid? Reviewing the stories from the research participants, all of them have mentioned, discussed, or just stated examples of tension, or secrets in their past. Some were embarrassing; others were tinged with a spot of humour. I have not used all of these examples in this thesis. As discussed earlier in Chapter Three, not every family's oral history is a perfect account, nor does it record only happy events.

The artefacts of life

In practice, family authored research draws on a range of personal records – diaries, letters, and memorabilia – as well as interviews, observations and field notes, to develop the narrative. Yet there is more to be gained through the research and as explained by Anderson & Glass-Coffin, (2013, p. 68) there is an:

> Evocative potential … to either open the researcher to deeper reflection on relevant experiences and relationships or to evoke compelling images, emotions, or understandings in other readers.

Legacy for the Baby Boomer photographic collections is twofold. In many instances they have inherited a small number of photographs from their parents or other family members. However, the personal collection of photographs by Baby Boomers is likely to provide an extensive legacy of images for future generations. My observations during the interviews, analysis of the data and reflection are based on the participants' reminiscences stimulated by their photographs.

Julie is an interviewee who has a growing interest in history in general and she has come to understand that her own collection of photographs has some historic value as well:

> For the future, all you can ask for I think, is that it might be useful to someone.

During her interview, Pauline drew my attention to a photograph of a child's timber highchair: 'I found this photo in the drawer on the farm, I'd forgotten all about this [here she indicated the highchair in the photograph]'. Discovering the old photograph (photo 17) amongst her mother's collection that had been 'passed on to Pauline', sent her on a search and discovery mission to find out what had happened to the highchair that had been made by her grandfather. The photograph prompted Pauline's memory of this piece of furniture and she recalled that numerous children had used the 'chair' over the decades, including herself and later her daughter and son when they were younger. The chair was eventually found, in the back of a shed on the family farm, and Pauline has helped her husband restore it. Now her grandchildren have used it as well. However, for Pauline it was not just the finding of the highchair that was important to her, but the family celebrations and stories she remembered, triggered by the photograph. Pauline has constructed a narrative around this photograph and now it is established as a legacy for her children and grandchildren.



Photo 17 *Pauline's father in the highchair built by her grandfather. This photograph was 'discovered' by Pauline amongst other photographs and papers in the family homestead.* *(used with permission)*

While interviewee Shirl did not specifically address legacy in her interview as 'it is all a little mundane', there is still an understanding that her daughter might want some photographs of herself growing up:

> So, the photos I have got of her tend to be those family occasions, Christmas with the grandparents and that sort of thing and I've kept those thinking that she might want them when she gets older.

Shirl has been ruthless in discarding photographs that she sees as having little or no relevance to her current circumstances in life. She has kept the few that mean something to her and over the coming years she will pass on those pictures and associated stories to her daughter.

I noted in the interview with John that he not only provides copies of those photographs he thinks are important to his children, he is also aware that they can do what they wish with them.

> So what I do with the kids, I send them photographs which I think are important for them to have but now it's all on digital. So what becomes of those I'm not sure. Once upon a time you'd print stuff, stick it in an album, put the album away [for them], now you've got a digital shot; what becomes of it I'm not sure.

He has not added any detailed stories with these digital copies, but over the years, John, his wife and the children have spoken about the images and as John claimed:

> They have their own memories too, so my ramblings may not be of any great interest to them, but at least they have them … if I get hit by a bus tomorrow.

This representation of life and experiences through family photographs, over time, becomes an 'irretrievable reality' captured through re-structured memories (Gibson 2008, p. 88). The review of Pauline, Shirl and John's insight to their legacy illustrates that the family collections of photographs have currency and are not only a prompt for memories, but also can be a continuing artefact for future generations.

Stan, an interviewee who grew up on a sheep station, remembers the family farmhouse having numerous photographs hanging on the walls in the hallways and formal entertaining rooms.

> Okay, yeah well there was always photos; it was, a great emphasis I suppose placed on photos within our family, on both sides of the family. Certainly my parents both had a drawer full of photos and some albums, and there was always photos hanging on the wall. I've got some of them here, in the room here now; those three photos were all out of my parents home, and the ones behind you were even

> out of my grandparents home, and there was always photos and grandma and grandpa had a lovely old photo album, you know, with all the Edwardian photo album, or late Victorian, early Edwardian photo album that had photos [in it].

During the interview Stan often commented on his inherited collection of photographs and it was apparent to me that he placed some significant importance on them. While he accepts that as a young child he was enthralled by the images, in later life he came to understand their value as a legacy. Not having children of his own Stan is ensuring that the photographs he inherited and his own collection are left to a niece, who he states will value them. Consequently, to the two generations of photographic bequests that Stan inherited, he is also adding his own photographs and will leave this consolidated collection as a larger photographic legacy.

A mother's legacy

In this discussion with Stan, I was once again drawn to my own memories of inheriting photographs. In 1996 I was living in Perth, Western Australia when my mother died. After her funeral in Adelaide I returned to Perth and my sister managed the executor matters around our mother's estate. Amongst other things Judith (my sister) informed me that she had a cardboard box of miscellaneous items that my mother wanted me to have – her bequest to me. It was more than nine years later, in 2005, after I returned to Adelaide to live, that Judith gave me the sealed carton. Over Easter 2013 I re-discovered this unopened box. Besides some small personal items of my mother's – pieces of costume jewellery and old personal papers – there were dozens of letters from my father to my mother, covering his army service during the Second World War. Tucked in amongst the letters and assorted papers was a faded off-white sealed envelope. It was somewhat brittle with age and had: 'for David – 1994', written across it in my mother's handwriting.

There were two items in the envelope; one was a lock of soft, blond hair, apparently from my first haircut, and the other was a tan-coloured Kodak Eastman photographic envelope. Inside this envelope were twenty-seven, black-and-white film negatives, of varying sizes. Some were badly damaged,

creased, or had deteriorated through age or other reasons. After carefully cleaning the negatives and looking at them on a light-box, I could distinguish images of people, rural settings and what looked like a family group. The era that the photographs were taken appeared to be in the 1920s. I could not recognise any individual from the negatives. None of these negatives were of a standard size, so I was unable to digitally scan them myself; subsequently I had them copied commercially. The contents of the box and the few negatives are 'a treasure trove of archival artefacts,' for me to make some sense of (Holbrook 2005, p. 47).

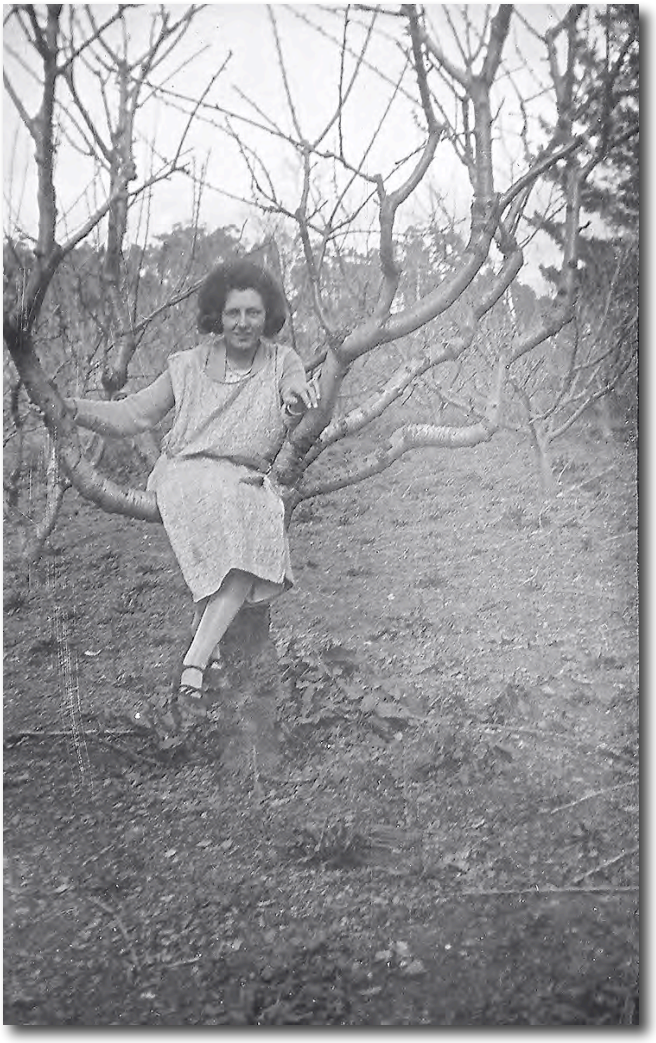

Photo 18 *My mother, Pearl Denton. The location of this photograph is unknown. Pearl would have been in her late teens at the time, c. 1922.*

Once digitally enhanced, what I could recognise was the back yard of my parents' former home and my eldest sister as a one-year-old. So some of these images I could date as being around late 1929. There were a number of other photographs of my mother's sisters and some cousins as well. All had been taken approximately twenty to twenty-five years before I was born. In studying these photographs I realised that I was seeking a view into my family's past, a past which I did not experience (Giorgio 2013, p. 411). Thus there are questions to which I still return and cannot answer. They include: who were the photographers and why the

different negatives sizes – I counted six – therefore what were the numerous cameras used and why?

For me however, the prize discovery was a photograph of my mother[73] as a teenager, possibly around eighteen or nineteen (photo 18). The photograph had been taken after she had moved from the family farm at Charra, on the far west coast of South Australia, to live with her elder sister in Parkside, a suburb of Adelaide. This is the only photograph I have of my mother as a teenager. I can only speculate as to why my mother considered it important for me to have this and the other negatives. Possibly it was because of my interest in history and having a passion for photographs. Reflecting on the interview with Stan, this bequest of a photographic legacy from my mother now forms part of my legacy.

In the frequent conversations we had about our family not once did my mother ever mention these negatives, or the missing photographs. Also in my numerous forages through the collection of family photographs in the sideboard drawer in our family dining room I cannot remember ever seeing prints from these negatives. What is equally interesting is that the date on the outer envelope is '1994'. That was the year she turned ninety. It also coincided with her shifting into a managed care facility and it was the year I moved to live in Perth. Had I not read Roland Barthes' *Camera Lucida* (2000), and in particular part two of this publication regarding his own mother's photograph I may never have fully appreciated this image of my mother.

While there are other pictures taken of my mother over the years, this one is rare. I can recognise her as my mother, yet she is a stranger. I never knew of her life then, as she never spoke of those early years of living in Adelaide. Maybe if I had asked questions I would know those details and have a fuller legacy from her. Even with these gaps in my mother's narrative my discovery now parallels similar findings. Research has shown that with the windfall of previously undiscovered family records and photographs the finder of this rich acquisition often becomes the family archivist (Popkin 2010).

73 *Pearl Sweet, née Denton, born at Charra, September 20, 1904.*

In discussing his ‘Winter Garden Photograph’ Barthes (2000) wrote about recognising his mother in fragments. Similarly, I only recognised my mother’s hair, her forehead, the shape of her face, and her smile. As for the remainder of the photograph, it could have been anyone. Unlike Barthes I have not viewed the images of my mother: ‘back through a life, not my own, but the life of someone I love’ (2000 (trans), p. 71). Mine is a collage of images, each coming to the fore, prompting a memory or a story, but not a life-story of my mother. She is still relatively unknown to me. Of her ninety-two years, we only lived together for sixteen. Now this single teenage image of my mother is precious. I do not know the truth of it, but it niggles at her identity (Barthes 2000 (trans), p. 71). Yet these photographs combine as her continuing legacy, which I now claim as my own.

Often those making these decisions as to whom is gifted objects or possessions select that person they consider best suited for such a bequest (Marcouz 2001, p. 220). This is what interviewee Stan has planned for his collection of photographs. In my case, I can only assume that my mother, in her ninetieth year, saw these negatives as something that I would value. She was aware of my interest in the history of the family and my passion for photography, including using a darkroom. That she could leave for me the negatives, letters and other objects, knowing that they would be seen as part of her legacy, would have comforted her. What would have been helpful for me though, are the stories around these images. The locations of where these photographs were taken are a mystery and I can only speculate as to their settings. Did my ‘future’ father take this photograph, was this their first date, or in the vernacular of the day, their first ‘walking out’?

In the rhetorical sense this small mystery has moved me. I can create my narratives, based on my knowledge and assumptions, but the actuality is lost to time. I find it somewhat incongruous that my mother went to some effort to ensure I received these negatives – yet she still left her larger collection of photographs to be picked over. While I cannot have my questions answered, these events have made me think about how I will ‘package’ my photographs and other objects and direct them to my children and grandchildren. Gibson (2008, pp. 1-3) discusses objects of the dead and argues that they continue to

have an influence on those still living. Reflecting on my experience, these missed opportunities to provide some closure to the stories and oral histories of my parents should be an inducement for others, and myself, not to make similar mistakes.

The legacy codicil

While many of the Baby Boomers in this research study wanted to leave their photographs to their children or wider family, often it was seen as an addition to their collection – something to do later. In discussing the leaving of a legacy, Hunter (2008, p. 48) states that it:

> Provides an avenue for continuity as it emerges from the past, develops in the present and is given to the future.

Interestingly, when this 'delaying excuse' was questioned further it revealed that these same participants had either planned what they were going to do, or had commenced packaging their photographic collection in some manner. However, there was broad agreement that additional information, more interesting narratives and further explanations could be included to add value and richness to the collections.

Julie is divorced and after many years of living and working in major cities has moved to a regional area of Victoria. Her 100-year-old timber cottage is warm, welcoming and comfortable. The items and bric-a-brac in the rooms reflect what is important in her life, the interest she has in history and her connection to her Australian heritage. Throughout our interview Julie draws together her past, as she remembers it, and amalgamates that with the collection of family photographs she wishes to pass on to her son. In a wide sweep of her arm indicating the photographs and books in the lounge-room, she ruminates about these material possessions and thinking of her son and her legacy to him states:

> There may be something in there that's useful to him and that really would make me pleased, and maybe to his children, or to a relative – somebody who might get something out of the collection – I think that'd be fine.

Ruth and Ross, who have been married for forty years and have one child, a son, have travelled extensively throughout Australia. They consider their photo collection as a reflection on their numerous trips and holidays. In outlining what they have done with their large collection of photographs and how they will save them for the future, Ross in deferring to his wife said: 'you've done like a book, to go with the pictures, like chronologically'. Continuing their exchange between themselves, they discussed specifics about various events and special holidays, and then Ruth added:

> I've written up on the computer and so forth. Actually, instead of photographs with that, I've actually picked out from the computer, little pictures that represent, like cartoon type things of the event of the day – like bubble thoughts – and written some words about the time or place.

Their son who travelled with them on many of these earlier holidays will eventually inherit their 'stuff'. Importantly for Ruth and Ross it will include all of their collection of photographs and the accompanying stories that have been written by Ruth. In the continuing discussion with them it became clear to me that they often talked about their photographs with their son. This confirmed that he is well aware of the family oral history, of the extended family, and the stories associated with the photographs.

Interviewee Ann did not see her family history or that of her ancestors as overly important. Yet Ann expressed strong passion and longing when she referred to the few photographs she had of her father as a boy and young man in the Port Pirie area of South Australia:

> I suppose if you look at my own family they [the photographs] are very important, but then when it gets back to further generations and it gets to be a curiosity and I don't think about it that much. I probably live more in the here and now.

In analysing her interview, it appears to me that Ann was ambiguous regarding her family background and history. Recently her father had died. He was in his late 80s. During the funeral service there were many photographs of him shown or on display. His grandchildren read eulogies and all commented on at least one photograph of their grandfather. It was not just the memories that were prompted from the images, but how they now formed part of his legacy to

them. In speaking with the four of them during the wake, I discovered that their grandfather often reminisced about his early life, his parents and the memories he had of his grandparents. Looking at his early photos albums and listening to his stories had entranced his grandchildren. There is acquiescence that current generations can look to their family's past and consider the similarities and differences and understand their own position in the wider family narrative. These are deemed as probable points of orientation (Martin, P, Hafestad & Diedrick 1988, p. 534). It now appears that whether or not Ann 'passes on her family legacy' is a moot point. Her children and her nieces and nephews have inherited their legacy directly from their now deceased grandfather.

An older married couple I interviewed, James and June, who have Baby Boomer children, have a significant written record of their family life. James has been the photographer for most of the family photographs. For more than twenty years June has written a daily diary:

> I've written a diary, so every day – at least twenty years – so, every day in that time on this date, I could tell you what we did. (June)

While neither James nor June have decided exactly what they will do with this comprehensive collection of personal observations and reports on their lives, they do want their descendants to have them. They wish to leave their legacy:

> [We are] going to have this long row of diaries – pick one out just to show the great-grandchildren, or the great-greats – just so that they'll know what life was like in these days, or if ever any of them are interested in a picture of old granny and grandpa, they can associate it with the book, or just do whatever you like. But I know they're a bit self indulgent, and it's my life and my story, and my slant on everyone, so other people may not be interested. I'll leave it for them. (June)

What James is doing to add to the interest and value of his wife's writings is to select family photographs to complement the narrative. However, their children don't have more than a passing interest in the 'family record' as yet. Both June and James are hopeful that they will, in time, come to appreciate the social and even historic value of these records:

> I've asked the children and they're not interested really, at the moment. They've read them and said, 'oh, that's interesting Mum'.

Besides writing their own story, this couple have researched their family history, told stories, and repeated the oral tales handed on from extended members of the family. Much of this has been documented. James commented that:

> Our son always says, 'oh, I'd love that tartan from your clan from Scotland and I'd like a photo of grandpa'. He wants to have it, so that when he's ready he will read through [the diaries] I'm sure. And the grandchildren are quite interested.

In discussing ethnography – and I claim that this is no different for autoethnographic texts – Van Maanen (1988, p. 25) suggests that it is essential for the author to understand the narrative to be written, its intended audience and when produced that it will be understood and appealing to readers. I found that June and James are a quiet couple and this tends to repress what is an interesting and unusual family history. Besides the recent past with their family of four children, their longer-term chronicle has exploits of slave trading in the 1600s and pugilistic success in the early part of the twentieth century. James and June have a rich narrative of myth, romantic stories and historic documents in their collection, including additional material from the past sixty years, of family photographs, life writing and oral history. While their children have mixed attraction to what June and James have written, their grandchildren are showing interest and engaging with the family stories.

The research in this study shows that many Baby Boomers enjoy their heritage. The discovery of artefacts and heirlooms from their parents or other family members provides a level of interest and pleasure. On this point Julie commented:

> I also enjoy looking at the family and the photographs of family members from a distant perspective. Who looks like who, and did that person carry a lot of weight and oh, I carry a lot of weight, so maybe I inherit from that [person]? I wish I had more pictures because I think I'd get a better, more well-rounded picture of how the families run through the generations.

Similarly Ann reflected on her mother and the memory of their discussions:

> Oh, Mum quite enjoyed reminiscing about those sorts of things I think, her family and talking about some of the things that they got up to [when] they were a very close family. So I suppose it gave her a, you know, some good feelings talking about them which probably came through to us kids too.

Also the expectation of leaving their own legacy is gratifying and one that many of those interviewed are starting to consider and plan for. With married couple Mavis and Ted, interest was generated when one of Mavis's uncles gave her a photograph of her great-great-grandfather. There were also a few other old photographs with that image as well. In this part of the interview Mavis became more animated and enthusiastically expounded on their discoveries:

> I didn't know those people, because I don't have the memories of them … so that was quite exciting to get those, yeah, I now feel as if the collection I've got is quite comprehensive really, and I'm hoping that somebody will appreciate them. I'm enjoying it; I'm just lucky in what I've done and what I've got.

Their children are interested in the family history, but having young families of their own, family history is not a high priority for them currently. This is where Mavis and Ted see their responsibility, to document the history for their children and grandchildren:

> We're really doing it to keep … for a bit of our history, and maybe our children mightn't appreciate it, but our grandchildren and great grandchildren, they love looking at the old photos.

In selecting the photographs: 'they organize[d] themselves into a story' stated Conrad, (2003, p. 18). Nonetheless, not all of those interviewed have well-considered strategies for their legacy, but there is an understanding that having their family photographs saved and given to their children and grandchildren has some merit. Similarly, sorting through their family photographic collection, building their memories and creating their legacy are seen as desirable and not a frustrating burden. I am not suggesting that these personal collections and constructing the narratives is a single priority for the Baby Boomers; it is not. The research has shown there are varying attitudes to the value of these personal collections – although there is an accord to leave something visual of themselves for future generations. Arguably family snapshots are a common occurrence in Australian homes and: 'such family photographs are phenomenally popular, and are often taken at moments seen as cementing family success' (Rose 2003, p. 6). I noticed that those interested in leaving a considered photographic legacy accept that others will do what they desire with it. There remains a level of control, on what is saved, the stories told and who becomes the beneficiary of their heritage. However, most do not consider how

future generations might interpret the social and cultural heritage they are providing.

The lost photographs

Sorrow over missing, lost, stolen, or destroyed photographs is a shared reflection by the research group. I have discussed this melancholy on a number of occasions. The common theme with this 'loss' is of sadness not just for those Baby Boomers affected, but also being unable to show their children and grandchildren these images and to talk about them. While the oral history can still be passed on, the lack of photographs is an unhappiness that is voiced often. Wendy encapsulated this sadness in her interview when she said: 'Sadly, some of the photographs that we had [have] been got rid of'.

John spoke of his brother being killed in a vehicle accident whist overseas. In time John started to go through his brother's possessions. However, he discovered the photographs were missing. Apparently his father had discovered some nude slides of the deceased son's girlfriend and decided to throw out all of the photographs. John is still upset as:

> It would have been cute, or funny to see his girlfriend nude, but what really I miss are the photos he had of us together as kids and through our teens. There're gone now, dad burnt them. Jeez I was angry.

Yet again the stories from the research participants jarred my own memories and showed how our respective narratives continue to weave a tapestry of encounters. In the Prologue to this thesis I opened with the headpiece quoting from a recording of a discussion I had with my mother in January 1990. It is the only record of her voice in existence and part of the family's oral history. However, it was the lament I sensed amongst those being researched about their missing photographs and lost oral histories that returned me to this single recording of my mother's voice. She talks of her lost photographs, of a caravan trip to Sydney in 1933. How much more valuable and informative that recording would be if there were photographs to support the narrative. The autoethnography woven throughout this thesis addresses that dichotomy. It blends my family's photographs, oral history, the myths, and stories to explain

our existence and provides a significant legacy that future generations can value.

Oral stories and those passed from generation to generation in the family are described as explaining what people did, their dreams, their beliefs and with the passage of time an understanding of their past (Portelli 2006, p. 36). My parents' photographs from the historic trip, towing a 'house on wheels', from Adelaide to Sydney in 1933, are lost. The only voice recording[74] I have of my mother provides another link between the narratives of my interviewees and my own experiences. As a child I often heard stories from my parents – especially my mother – of this difficult journey. In my imagination I created pictures of what these caravans and cars looked like and I was gripped by the oral history of my parents' and my eldest sister's (Marie's) unique experiences. Unfortunately as a child rummaging through my parents' photographs, or later as an adult, I never saw any picture or documents of this unique holiday. Then a passing comment from my 93-year-old brother-in-law renewed my search. With a little luck and a number of phone calls, the stories I heard as a child were verified. In early 2014, a few photographs (photos 19 and 20) and newspaper reports (photo 21) were found, creating further narratives about this epic journey.



Photo 19 *Taken in 1933 during the 'caravan trip' from Adelaide to Sydney and return. My father is leaning against the caravan on the left, my mother is second from the right and my eldest sister (then four years old) is in the light skirt; Lois Clarke (née Lambert), is in the dark skirt. (used with permission)*

74 *See the Headpiece to the Prologue for the transcript of this segment of the interview.*

Whilst the discovery is an interesting account, this is not where the value rests. Now, through a combination of photographs, oral history, legacy and newspaper reporting, what I as a child inherited from my mother's stories, will endure as part of my legacy (photo 19). Her story has now become my story.

More than eight decades after that adventure, Lois Clarke (née Lambert) is the only member of the touring group still alive. In May 2014 she stated:

> I had my fifth birthday in Sydney and when we were in Canberra we had a photo taken with the caravans in front of Parliament House (photo 20). At times we had to get out of the cars and walk when we went up steep hills.



Photo 20 *Photographed in April 1933. The two motorcars with the 'house on wheels' attached in front of the 'old' Parliament House, Canberra. (used with permission)*

The photographs draw together the elements of oral history, re-remembering and authentication for the compilation of these rich stories. There is a convergence of ethnography and autoethnography where personal associations also inform the narrative and oral history.

These are inherited photographs and the associated oral history from them, which encapsulates the essence of family history and how easily that history

can be lost. Lois's only child[75], her son, is dead. Now through fortuitous events, this slice of history will survive as a part of a photographic autoethnographic narrative. This is one interesting and somewhat different example that demonstrates how Baby Boomers have the opportunity to curate their photographic collections, personal or inherited, giving added value to their legacies (photo 21).


Spending a Holiday on Wheels

NOVEL CARAVAN—Mr. A. Lambert, of Fullarton, and his son, Mr. L. Lambert and friends, have travelled 1,100 miles from Adelaide in 12 days in this road "tram." These pictures were taken between Sydney and Liverpool. Top—How the cars and trailers are linked up for the road. Bottom—A roadside camp.

Photo 21 *This is a copy of the original newspaper cutting (undated) held by Lois Clark. Using the 'Trove' digitised newspaper records I established that this photograph was published in the 'Wellington Times' (NSW) on Monday April 10, 1933, page 6.*

The means and methods

During the lifetime of the Baby Boomers technology and its applications for photographic use have developed and been important in recording family life. How this technology will evolve in the next decade is unknown. Continuing change will prevail and have an impact on how technology will be used and adapted for the family photo records into the future (Van House 2009, p. 1082).

75 *Christopher Bridgeland was a Baby Boomer who grew up in Fullarton South Australia. He and I were childhood friends. As a young adult Christopher moved to Canberra.*

It became apparent during the interviews that while digital technology 'is the way of the world now', (interviewee Andrew) the multitude of choices in documenting their family photographs is challenging for Baby Boomers. Here I also explore how those I interview use and react to the growing prevalence of technology for recording their lives and providing their legacy.

Technology and the family narrative

The Internet is playing a greater role in recording the personal lives of ordinary people. With greater frequency there is a muddling of the division between the private and public facets of our lives as presented on the Internet (Macnamara & Zerfass 2012, p. 301). In some cases it is by individual choice and acceptance. Nonetheless, significant aspects of our existence are recorded by marketing stealth (Singer, N 2010). Since the rise in popularity of social media in the past six or seven years the post Baby Boomer generations have embraced this means of communications and online storage.

While many of the participant Baby Boomers aspire to a legacy in some manner, how they are going to undertake this challenge is bewildering for some. Technological advances offer a perplexing array of options to store images, create story repositories, or provide a means to document the Baby Boomers' experiences. The social media platform Facebook® became accessible to the public in September 2006, although it had already been in operation through a network of American universities for more than two years (Phillips 2007).

At the time of the bulk of my Baby Boomer interviews (between 2009 and 2011) very few were Facebook users. In mid-2014 I undertook a search to discover how many of the forty-six participants I had interviewed were using social media networks. While this thesis is not about social network engagement, it is interesting to note that nineteen of the research participants are active on Facebook® and Instagram®. Their use appears to be limited to shared exchanges between 'friends' and often between their children and grandchildren.

Jillian Crider[76] was the only Baby Boomer of the interview group who regularly blogs. She uses her personal blog for posting photographs, recording her family stories, and other comments about growing up in Adelaide as a Baby Boomer (photo 22).

The photographs Jillian posts on her blog she uses as the basis for her written narratives. Often these stories include other family incidents and memories driven by the photograph. In one such story Gillian talks of her uncle who was an iceman (ice carter):

> On hot days he would shave ice from a large block and let me wrap it up in my handkerchief to suck on. That was a special treat, but I don't have a photograph of that. On my web I used one [of an iceman] I found online here in America.

I noted that Jillian, like the others I interviewed, also returned to the early years of her life and those reflective memories. An example of this interest in the first seventeen or eighteen years of her life, Jillian uses images of herself and others around her home and in the local community to help tell her narrative (photo 22). She has a strong interest in writing about her forbearers and their lives and in her words: 'There are some fascinating stories there that I have only just discovered'. What is of interest is how the technological advances affect the legacy of the Baby Boomers' family photographic collections and the narrative accounts of their respective lives.

The academic discussions on the use and understanding of evolving technology are generally directed to professional application, for example, medicine, engineering, education, or management practices. Computer-specific magazines such as *PCMag, PCWorld* or *MacWorld,* while popular, do not have an extensive readership in Australia[77]. Large digital photo collections, it is argued: 'lack the ability to consider the user [and] the corresponding memories' (Blažica, Vladušič & Mladenić 2013). Therefore there is a need by the oral historian/photographic ethnographer to not only manage and understand a

76 *I 'discovered' Jillian through the Adelaide Remembers When Facebook site* https://www.facebook.com/pages/Adelaide-Remember-When/424061334351353 *and linked with her* Blog http://bornin1948.blogspot.com.au/2008_10_01_archive.html *I was then able, at the time, to interview her via email as she was then living in the USA. Jillian recently (2015) returned to Adelaide. She has given permission for me to use any of the material from her emails and blogs.*

77 *As an example, according to IDG, the website of the publisher of MacWorld, its audited circulation is 14000 copies per month.* http://www.idg.com/www/IDGProducts.nsf/ByKey/Australia_Publication_Macworld-Australia *accessed March 5, 2015.*

range of digital capturing software, but also the eventual output from the technology (DeBlasio 2009, pp. 108-109; Richards 2009, pp. 27-32).

All the interviewees have an understanding of technology; some embrace it while others are apprehensive. An additional issue is the plethora of options available for all those who embrace the digital world. A simple online search (2015) in the Apple App Store using the word 'journal' brought up 71 'Apps' ranging in cost from free to $380. A 'journal' allows a user to record their thoughts, stories, photographs, travels and life as an electronic diary.



Photo 22 *Jillian Crider as a teenager in the rear of her parents' home at Grange, a seaside suburb of Adelaide, taken on October 16, 1966.*
Used with permission.

Then add to this set personal websites, blogs through providers such as Wordpress® or Blogspot®, genealogical sites, for example Ancestry.com, or professional organisations such as the Association of Personal Historians, the choice is overwhelming. Blogs, or weblogs are: 'an opportunity for anyone to

self-publish their own prose about themselves, their business, politics, or any other random observations' (Medley 2011, p. 144). These are not the only options available either. When it comes to the actual digital image (either a digital photograph or a scan of an analogue print) then the demands on the Baby Boomer archivist are even greater. A useful tool for the Baby Boomer would be a single website where these individual 'Apps' or digital recording and processing options were compared and explained.

Boomers' views on technology

All of the interview participants use various aspects of the digital world, from email and word processing to digital photography. While those interviewed acknowledged that technology, digital photography, online storage and similar internet-based offerings have changed the way in which family photography is used, they remain cautious in relying on it fully. Sue, when interviewed, explained:

> My older grandchildren are always on Facebook and stuff like that and my daughter also sends me photos of her two boys, but I don't understand all the new things. I can't take a picture on my phone. I have a digital camera, but I go to OfficeWorks and get someone there to help me print them out.

She has a large collection of photographs in albums, dating back to her first year of having left school and starting work as a trainee nurse. Once she married, her mother gave Sue a number of photographs of her as a baby and young girl, which she now holds in a special album and is not intending to scan them to store on a computer:

> I look through the album from time to time. I guess they are a legacy from mum to me. They mean a lot to me, more I guess than they do to my husband and maybe they will to my daughter in time.

Although interviewee Ted uses aspects of digital photography and computer storage, he claims:

> That's part of the problem too, this built in redundancy that we have with technology now.

Others interviewed voice similar concerns, highlighting the speed of changes in technology, its growing complexity and being unable to keep abreast of the

developments and its cost. Although no one who was interviewed stated that their legacy of photographs and oral history would be compromised by the rapid changes in technology, there was an understanding that the technology had some issues and that hard copies are a safe option.

Mavis, whom I interviewed with her husband, is another of the interviewees who wants to leave a legacy, but does not want to rely on digital technology:

> So it's all happened since we had the grandchildren that we've got the digital, so, I'm all the time thinking, oh, I'll just capture that, and if it comes out good that can go in their album that I'm making up for them.

Andrew, a writer and editor, is critical of the domestic user of technology in preserving their photographic collection. He states:

> A vast majority of ordinary family snap shooters don't understand the importance of archiving their images.

Similar to Ted (earlier in this chapter), Andrew's argument is that companies have a vested interest in changing and updating technology, but not always making the transition easy. He claims that people are not well organised and often lazy when it comes to saving their images. They are not, he argues, taking the best options to preserve their histories:

> I don't know what the impact of that will be socially but it will certainly have an impact for the historians who are trying to keep records of what people have done and how they did things.

With a contrary viewpoint, George, who is a senior representative for a global technology conglomerate, argues that technology today is about mobility:

> Whether it is commercial applications or domestic use, people like having their technology, their photographs and other personal data at their fingertips.

He continued, explaining that future-proofing technology has advantages over the older forms of physical media such as photographic prints, photo albums, books or former digital technology. By using 'Cloud Technology' online stored records are easily converted to a new format. Giant 'server farms' with built-in management of redundancy are constructed throughout the world. With a slight

smile he adds that many of the providers still invest in the physical as well: 'people still like the hard copies of books, photo albums or diaries'.

Technology on offer

There are many viable businesses offering a range of printed – hard copy – options, from individual photographic prints to a selection of personalised books. Technology companies, like Apple™ (and others) provide both the digital and physical hard copy solutions for users to record their images and stories. Using any search engine on the Internet will quickly find a provider that meets an individual's requirements. No matter where in the world that provider is located it can take the digital data provided and in a short turn-around time return a professionally presented publication to a place specified. While these printed books are a form of traditional media [compared to new media] their creation and production use aspects of digital story-telling. This digital story-telling is socially constructed: 'in a similar yet different fashion to traditional family photo albums and domestic photo frames and displays' (Vivienne & Burgess 2013, p. 285). While the traditional albums are likely to have a restricted circulation and there is a degree of control over issues of privacy, this is not the case with online, digital story-telling. The digital self-representation is shared on platforms often with open access and limited controls.

Sharon, who I interviewed at her place of work, is a daughter of Baby Boomer parents. She is employed by a printing business, which specialises in book creations from digital data supplied by their clients. Users download software that provides a range of templates that can be adapted for the individual to create their own publication. Once completed, the file is uploaded to the provider and depending on the size and quantities ordered, the printed book is delivered to the person's home in a matter of days. In the interview, Sharon claimed that:

> I guess the over 40's, mature age, you know … people are really open to the idea. A lot of them are very computer literate, so they're happy to learn the programs and create it themselves.

In this business' experience and according to Sharon, its competitors' experience as well, customers see distinct advantages in having a digital option for their family photographs, narratives and history. She explains it as:

> Having the availability to something like a digital photo book you can have the same album or stories produced two or three times and share it with your family, and other people can have those photos as well. If the book does get damaged or anything like that, you've still got the digital file that you can then reproduce again in other formats, or do with what you like.

As Sharon and George (earlier) indicated, there are options for a completely digital archive for Baby Boomers to consider when recording their family history.

However, I argue that a single approach to recording the times of the Baby Boomers through their family photography is limiting. A mix of photographs, photo albums, physical material, hand-written notes, and digital files provide options that Baby Boomers can use to record their narratives and provide a legacy. In 2014-15 I analysed a random selection of five commercial online options for individuals, families, or groups to join and become members. These sites and businesses offer membership for a fee and when the fee is paid then access is granted. However, there are two issues that a potential member needs to reflect upon. Consideration needs to be given to what happens when the owner dies or the membership lapses. Similarly, if the provider goes out of business, that becomes a complex issue of dealing with an online entity that cannot be accessed. In either case the recourse to reclaim the family records and history stored on the facility is problematic. Many of these Internet businesses are based in countries outside of Australian legal jurisdiction, which adds to the challenges confronting the future family archivist and researcher.

Technology offers the option to establish an online presence through a personal dedicated web page or using the popular 'blog'. A blog or web-log is a personalised web page where the owner can post or write information on any subject they chose. As I previously stated, only one of those interviewed for this thesis has created and regularly updates a personal blog. I acknowledge that this is an exception to what all others I interviewed undertake in recording their family histories. Jillian does not use her blog as a diary of current events in her life. For her it is a reflective piece where she adds to its contents as her

memories occur, or she rediscovers photographs of her past. From the research it appears that while these Baby Boomers understand technology and use it, their preference is still drawn to the physical as their family history record. However, the two options are not mutually exclusive. There is an opportunity for further research to build on the photographic autoethnography I have expounded. This additional research could examine and review easy and cost-effective options to safely record these legacies in both hard copy, digitally and where redundancy is avoided.

Continuity through legacy

Scholars Becker (1973) and McAdams (1993) suggest that personal legacies are a grasp for immortality. Legacy is the act of leaving something for future generations. When considering family oral histories, and for this thesis, photographic autoethnography, I concur with the argument that:

> Legacy is one way in which a person concludes their life story and projects key elements of identity as expressed in this life story forward to future generations (Sousa et al. 2010, p. 6).

Whether the individual identifies with this desire for enduring acknowledgement or not, Baby Boomers (and others) wish to leave their spot in time, and to be remembered. Interviewee Julie describes it as:

> I feel that I haven't done my collection justice, and I'm hoping that there'll be time to actually improve it and make it good, but I'm not sure why. I don't know if it's going anywhere or doing anything, but I think I want to be remembered – well maybe I just want to be remembered, but I would like it to be complete and I feel that way about so many things in my life, that all my paperwork should be neat too, and so, my photos should be neat too, and wind up and have a finish.

My research supports the findings by some of the more recent scholarly discussions of Popkin (2010), Hunter and Rowles (2005) and Marcoux (2001), amongst others, that there is a desire by many to leave something of themselves for future generations. However, this thesis highlights not only the potential, but also the strength in using family photo collections as a primary source for memory-making and oral history for providing a legacy. Furthermore, I agree with the claims by Ellis (1995) and Denzin (1992) that legacies are

interpretive and continue to evolve, immaterial as to their genesis. Legacies are not irrevocably locked in their telling, or in time.

Interviewee Pauline shows significant pleasure in adding some ‘history’ to her growing collection of older family photographs. Her comments, reported in the headpiece to this chapter, outline how her mother and uncle recorded relevant details on many of the photographs now held by her. This legacy of photographs and stories, which Pauline has inherited, is now part of her legacy that she is providing for her children and grandchildren.

The desire and commitment to recording their ‘personal history’ no matter its form, thus providing their legacy, is one of many obligations contemplated by the Baby Boomers I interviewed. I note that one of the challenges facing Baby Boomers in endowing their legacy of photographs and narratives is the physical form it will take. The convergence of technologies, if used effectively, will enhance the value of the Baby Boomer stories for future generations. However, the mastering of technology for Baby Boomers, I suggest, is one of their bigger challenges. While many members of the older generations are computer literate, the ever growing technology-based options for them to master continue to be a challenge. All of those participants I interviewed have some interaction with digital photography and computer use, none have become completely reliant on digital technology, nor do they intend to provide a paperless legacy.

There remains the option for Baby Boomers to ignore the fast growing developments in the digital world and jot their stories on the back of photographs, or in short captions in photo albums. I argue that any digital technology used is secondary to the narrative; it is more important and interesting to understand how people make sense of themselves and their lives. The key point I wish to emphasise is that Baby Boomers, in utilising their family photographs, have a unique opportunity to record their oral history and offer a social and cultural experience as a valued history and to provide their legacy.

> *I find photographs often make me cry, and I don't think I'm alone in that. I noticed my son, the same, one day looking through some photo albums when he was alone and I came upon him and he was crying over lost hopes and expectations, and that's sad. But yes, I look at [photographs of] my grandparents who are all dead, and I think about the times that I remember that were both sad and happy. Both my grandparents on my mother's side died of cancer … so that brings back some quite sad and very unhappy sort of memories. But then, there are other ones that I think of, and I remember the day, the scene … and it brings back wonderful memories.*
>
> *Interviewee Julie*

This chapter builds on the research from the preceding chapters illustrating a personal connection to, and denoting the importance and value that I place on, my family photographic collection. Previously, I highlight how those participating in the research are continually drawn to their formative years, and the memories that their collections of family photographs generate. I emulate that approach here. However, there is a shift in the method of my research when compared to the earlier chapters. In the interviews, as the researcher, I am interpreting the data, narratives, or stories the interviewees provide. However, with a personal autoethnographic narrative it disrupts the norms of research, provides a personal voice and interpretation, and draws on the stories from an insider's knowledge (Holman-Jones, S, Adams, T & Ellis, C 2013, p. 32). Following is an autoethnographic account recalling some of my early memories of experiencing the family oral history, myths, secrets and celebrations, but drawn from my photographs. In Chapter Four, 'Nostalgic threads', I illustrate and discuss this method, using my first photo album (photo 14) to find a specific photograph. Consequently I spent many hours looking at the pictures in this album and as I worked through its pages I made notes of my recalled memories. Some of these early memories (as outlined in Chapter Four) are directly related to a specific photograph, others are prompts to stories and memories recalled through the image.

Whereas Anderson and Glass-Coffin (2013, p. 75) argue that 'autoethnographic writing is most successful when it is emotive [and] when the readers can feel

their lives deeply touched by the stories that they read', each of my photo-prompted narratives will affect readers in differing ways. The following segment is predominantly autoethnographic. I use examples from my collection of family photographs as its foundation to tell stories.

This photographic autoethnography method adopted here is an example and a possible guide for others to emulate in order to expand their own oral and family history. While this method may not be conventional, I argue that it is a creative style in crafting an autoethnographic account and one, which Boomers or others may use. It can be a helpful method for those who are unsure how to commence their history, or have poorly annotated collections of family photographs in albums, shoeboxes and hoarded as miscellaneous compilations around their homes. The family and home remain the core and most valued aspect of life for most people (Gillis 1996, pp. 21, 22; Pauwels 2008, p. 37). I argue that this includes the family history and its eventual legacy. As Carolyn Ellis explains in the introduction to *Revision*, she is 'both the author and the focus of the story' (2009, p. 13). Similarly in significant aspects of this thesis I am the narrator of the stories about me – the storyteller. Furthermore in this autoethnographic chapter, I use photographs as the means of revealing interesting and detailed stories about me and my family.

With this approach the narrator need not rely on memory alone. The photographs act as a prompt. They are a memory maker, which evolves over time, complemented by the complexity of childhood memories being fused with the understanding of adult realities (Smart 2011, p. 543). This methodology is similarly used in the interviews conducted with the participants. Furthermore, the resulting stories, whether oral renditions, or transcribed, become a memoir of the family's past, a cultural history repository, and a complement to their legacy. However, in a more personal reflection the photograph is also about the act of being and 'the evidence that indeed … [I] existed' (Ellis & Bochner 1996, p. 380).

The photographs become the links to the stories that jump time and place, as memories surge to the forefront, then recede as the next image focuses on other recollections. Thus a strictly chronological narrative is not obligatory.

These are stories based on the experiences of the individual and their family, encapsulated through the family snapshot. However, the following is not my complete story – if there ever can be a finished version. I suspect not, as each time I look at a photograph, no matter how often I have viewed it in the past it generates different thoughts and refreshed tales. Similarly, objectivity is a variable. Both the interviewee and myself as the interviewer introduce our respective values, attitudes and reconstruction of our past (Quinlan 2011, p. 35). Some of the stories are only prompted by the image. In expressing the desire of their 'family memories', Wilton (2011, p. 61) states:

> "We decided to photograph memories". [original emphasis] Rather than using photographs only as triggers of memory, the need to remember also triggered the need to photograph.

Taking photographs to view sometime in the future is a commonly accepted activity. However, Wilton (2011) has placed the emphasis and significant importance on the value of remembering. My photographs engender so many thoughts and memories for me. For example, the two photographs (photo 37 and photo 51) showing the front of the family home in Myrtle Bank[78] remind me of my childhood and the vivid imagination I possessed. For each book or comic I enjoyed, the large veranda became the imaginary stage for me to dream. I was able to turn it into a sailing ship, a soaring Tiger Moth, or a trip to Mars with Dan Dare.[79] Then I recall the times after school when I would be sitting on one of the two large brick piers which guarded the entrance to the front-door, waiting for my father to come home from work. From my vantage point I would watch him stroll across the footbridge at the end of the street. The afternoon newspaper would be tucked under his arm – he had read it on the tram trip home. Occasionally there would be a treat for me hidden in the bottom of his well-worn brown leather kitbag.

Many times the veranda became the 'theatre' for us local children to act out a play whilst our parents patiently watched, a little amused and probably bored. I spent hours lying on the wide, cool, brick balustrade, sometimes with friends. Each of us would use our imaginations to discover shapes of animals, trucks,

78 *Myrtle Bank is a south eastern suburb of Adelaide, nestled below the foothills of Glen Osmond.*
79 *Dan Dare is a British science fiction hero from the Eagle comic, published in the 1950s. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dan_Dare*

ships, or faces in the clouds as they drifted past. As a ten-year-old, in 1957, I stared into the black star-speckled sky looking for the small dot of flashing white-light from the Russian Sputnik satellite. I don't have individual photographs of these experiences, but the two images of our family home generate these and many other stories. Photographs, I argue, not only indicate obvious facts and reproduce a scene, but also provide links to prompt a wide range of stories, memories and dreams. Some of these memories are not so happy, clinching the sometimes-cruel aspects of nostalgia. In many ways my use of a photograph to recall aspects of my life not immediately associated with what is actually rendered in the frame is similar to the experiences of many of the research participants. Interviewee Ross commented:

> In some ways, [photographs] bring you back, to accurately reflect, but as soon as I see the photos, then I remember when, and it brings back a lot of memories.

For this thesis my narrative is written. There are other options to document personal tales that can be considered, such as using the recorded voice, or a video filming as oral histories. Also one of the numerous computer-generated eBooks, iBooks®, or other eJournal applications could be adapted to an individual's needs. The means of notating the stories based around the family photographic collection is important, as this can have some bearing on what is told and its relationship to memory. What is vital, however, is the understanding that if the tales, the past, myths, and the cultural history of families' photographic collections are not recorded, then they will eventually be lost.

An autoethnographic interpretation of a life or an event is not self-indulgent, according to Pelias (2013, p. 387). The following narratives are based on my memories and what I believe to be factual. I selected the photographs in this chapter to stimulate my story, allowing me to also reflect upon the experiences of individuals in my research pool. However, these are not necessarily the best examples of my photographic skills; often they are rather amateurish and poor in quality. That is part of their charm for me. This 'reality' of the photograph is the richness that adds to the depth and substance of my narrative. In supporting this vibrancy of the photographic narrative I draw on earlier discussions, specifically from Chapters Three, Four and Five. In keeping with

the tone of the research, I extract evocative experiences, in the main, from the first two decades of my life. Of course there are other stories throughout my life, but I similarly apply a general theme of 'early memories' that is the driving factor of those I researched. There are many approaches to an autoethnographic narrative. This is one example and applies photographic autoethnography to recount the memories these photographs invoke. Moreover I employ oral history concepts, using family photography, cultural understanding and genealogy to narrate aspects of my story and editorialise my legacy.

Before the beginning

I cannot, with any reliability, claim a single event or moment in my life when photography and photographs became more than a passing interest. In my memory, photographs have always been part of my life. My maternal grandmother, who lived with my parents, gave me a camera for my tenth birthday (photo 23).



Photo 23 *The Kodak Browning Flash II camera used by me for more than ten years. My dream was to become a photographer, but my father had different plans for me.*

Decades later I can still embrace the excitement and sense of pleasure I experienced that Friday morning. Breakfast was forgotten and I pleaded not to go to school, without success. At 3.40 pm, when the school bell tolled and students scrambled from the classrooms, I ran the half mile home to discover that between eight in the morning and four in the afternoon, rules had been invented. Impatiently I jumped from foot to foot as my mother gave me the directives. I did not want to listen. I wanted to take photos, my photos. The camera, instructions, and the two rolls of Kodak 120 film, with eight exposures each, is one of the few gifts I received as a child I clearly remember. Interestingly, none of those I interviewed during the research mentioned being excited when they first used, or were given a camera. A number of the participants remembered using a borrowed camera, often for a holiday without their parents, although none showed any strong connection to the event, other than they had some photographs of the occasion.



Photo 24 *My grandmother, Merce Denton. The first photograph I took. Friday August 23, 1957.*

Contemplating the first photograph I took draws out so many memories for me. The image shows a little, white-haired, gracious old lady – my grandmother. I took the picture in my parents' backyard, out past the clothesline and next to the loquat tree. Holding a bunch of yellow and white daffodils, freshly picked, she was almost lost in the branches of the Geraldton wax bush.

The resulting photograph was not terribly good. My fumbling and inexperienced fingers had allowed the paper-encased and tightly wound film to unroll

slightly when I loaded it into the camera. Hence there are the streaks of light across the top of the photograph (photo 24). Over the years I have often gazed at this photograph, but I have never felt disappointment with how it turned out. For me the photo has beauty and quiet charm – it is my grandmother and it drives my memories of her and of starting photography.

She died at our home on a Friday night just before my twelfth birthday. She was ninety-one. I cried. My parents didn't tell me that my grandmother was dead; that was left to my two brothers-in-law, Les Kenyon and Bob Stephenson. In our family during the 1950s children and death were separated and I didn't attend her funeral. That evening, after having been at my Scout Group meeting and then watching the black-and-white television[80] programs at a neighbour's home, I was shunted off to my eldest sister's place for the weekend. I had my camera with me, and took two photographs the following morning. They were of my nephew Bruce and his younger sister Denise playing in their backyard. It is those two images that drag up the stark reality of the death of my grandmother, the feeling of loss, and never quite forgiving my sisters and parents for not allowing me to attend her funeral. Apparently going to school was far more important. In outlining aspects of nostalgia (Chapter Five) I discuss death and funeral rites. The photographs taken that Saturday morning following my grandmother's death are a stimulus to memory and a memento of a past.

As I write this piece I reflect on a phone call I received at 1.30 am this morning[81], from my nephew Dwayne. Judith, my sister, his mother, had just died. I am now truly the last of my parents' children. Her funeral will have relatives and friends looking back on her seventy-nine years, but not celebrating her life. We did that five years ago before dementia corroded her personality. Then, as an aid to her failing recall, we would look at photographs and talk of our memories. Judith's children and school-age grandchildren will be there, as will her nieces, nephews and other family members. The Monday of her funeral

80 *My parents did not purchase a television until late 1960. It was a black-and-white set and the television cabinet was 'Queen Anne' style, polished rose-wood.*
81 *Judith died on October 4, 2014.*

will be the first day back for students after school holidays. Compared to my experience as a child, there is, I reflect, a certain irony here.

Photography, I found out very quickly, was not without cost. First it was the price of the film, and then the developing. Forget about a photo album, that was a luxury well out of my reach. I knew the basics of developing film, but my parents would not let me, at the age of ten and eleven, play with chemicals. My pocket money was one shilling a week plus the few pennies I earned pulling weeds for neighbours. Often the exposed film would sit in my bedroom drawer for a few weeks until I had enough money saved to get it developed. With almost enough money saved I would walk to Mr Bird's, the Chemist, on Fullarton Road, Highgate, and deposit my film. Twice a week a bag containing the exposed films was sent off to Kodak for processing. It normally took about two weeks for the photographs to be returned to the chemist. That gave me a little more time to save the final pennies to pay Mr Bird.

Knowing of my interest in photography he would occasionally add a small brochure about film or cameras with my prints. I would devour the additional information and read the hints that were often on the inside of the 'Kodak envelopes' (Slater 1991) (photo 25). My photographic results never replicated the images I saw in the newspapers, magazines or on my swap-cards. Not discouraged by this 'failing', I kept snapping, tempered only by financial constraints.



Photo 25 *I collected my processed photographs from Mr Bird's, the local chemist shop. Kodak and other photo processing companies used photographic envelopes similar to this.*

My first darkroom

Just before my thirteenth birthday I had saved enough money to buy the (beginner's) Kodak home developing kit. The cost of five guineas seemed astronomical and I remember saving for months, counting my collection of coins and the odd ten-shilling note after every pocket-money day. The kit only came with the basic material, enough for developing a few films and about twenty-five contact prints[82]. The reproduction of some of my early photographs used in this thesis is amateurish and poor in quality – for example photographs 15, 24, 37, 55 and 56. Yet I am far from disappointed in these examples. Besides the captured snapshots and the pleasant memories they prompt, they are the perfect reality of my first darkroom experiences – self-taught through trial and error. John was the only interviewee who had some darkroom experiences, although he was in his early twenties when he commenced learning those techniques. However, our respective memories of these experiences differ. For John it was a new skill he was learning and one he now never uses. As a young teenager I was acquiring a passion for photography, which continues to be a part of my life.

Buying a developing kit

All of these 'first photographs' resurrect my memories of buying the home developing kit. One Monday in late July after school had finished for the day, I collected my savings, hidden in my bedroom, and caught the tram into the city. Later, standing in front of John Mac's[83] photographic shop I was shy and too scared to venture inside in case I made a fool of myself. I longed for someone to read my mind and help me. It didn't happen. Annoyed with myself I eventually wandered off. With all the build-up, the expectations and excitement I was going to go home empty handed. In my uncertainty, I wandered through Gawler Place, Grenfell Street and into one of the arcades between Grenfell and Rundle Streets. I climbed the stairs to the first floor shops, with no particular destination in mind. Then, I noticed a shop advertising camera repairs, and in

82 *A 'contact print' is created when the developed negative film is sandwiched between a single piece of glass and a sheet of unexposed photographic paper. This 'sandwich' is then exposed to light and the photographic paper is processed through development, fixing the image, washing, and drying to obtain a positive image, the same size of the original negative film.*

83 *John Mac was a well know photographer and photographic business owner in Adelaide during the 1960s and into the following decades.*

the window was one of the Kodak home developing starting kits. The black box with its yellow lid was the only thing I could see. Again, I stood by a shop door, nervous and apprehensive.

After a few minutes the door opened and a tall, regal looking lady came out and asked if she could help me. I stammered a reply and she took my hand and we walked into the shop. It was a wonderland – there were different types of cameras, studio lights, darkroom equipment, books – a photographic treasure trove and a jumbled muddle. More importantly for me was the box of developing equipment I had been longing for. Apparently it had been ordered for a customer and he had not come back to purchase it. I didn't understand the concept of deposits and 'lay-by', but it meant that it was now for sale and £1/5/6 cheaper than I expected. Smiling and chatting continuously she wrapped up my purchase in brown paper and tied it up with 'doubled' string so I could carry it home (photo 26). Proudly, I scampered along Rundle Street, my bulky parcel under my arm, to my father's office and a ride home.



Photo 26 *c1950s this is similar to the 'home developing kit' I purchased. (Sourced (Monahan 2013))*

For the next three years our bathroom became a makeshift darkroom. With a grey 'army issue' blanket, double-folded across the window, and another blanket strung across the door to keep out stray light, I spent hours locked away, mixing the different solutions, and learning some basic darkroom techniques (Brooks 1979, pp. 68-70; Time-Life 1978, pp. 168-169). A folding card table made a temporary working bench and a 'goose-necked' reading lamp placed over the unexposed contact print would be flicked on and off as I counted the seconds of exposure. It was rudimentary and guess-work, until I learnt the art of test exposures, or test strips. With the cramped space in the bathroom, I would line the developing, fixing, and washing trays on the floor. Now, fifty

years later when looking at these photographs I can still remember the excitement I felt then. I can recall being on my hands and knees, the red safelight providing a dim warm glow that turned everything in the bathroom pink while I watched the emerging image of my pictures darkening and come to life.

As discussed in Chapter Two, this reminiscence and the following response to my memory of the darkroom are other examples of the emotive nature of nostalgia (Routledge et al. 2012). Even in today's digital world, I am still in awe of the magic of the darkroom. For me it is the smells of the chemicals, the glow of the red safety-light, and the total isolation from the outside world that are special and exciting. Watching a blank sheet of paper transform to a scene that I captured is my art, my creation, my magic. Other than interviewee John, none of the others interviewed experienced this creative aspect of photography and the darkroom.

Photography has always been part of my story. Often the camera provided the segue between my activities, interests and employment. I have observed that oral historians use various artefacts to trigger recall, and photographs have become one evidential tool in discovering otherwise forgotten information (Ritchie 2003, p, 99; Thomson 2011b, pp. 288-292). While the darkroom is an important part of my photo-induced memories, none of my interviewees spoke of similar experiences. However, this is more than just my story. Aspects of life, cultural understanding, social activities and an impression of the life of Baby Boomers in the 1950s and 1960s in Australia can be visualised through family photographs.

Photo-memory

In Chapter Three, in discussing memory-making, I commented on interviewee Mervin lamenting that he failed to spend time with his father to hear, record, or remember the narratives of his life. Similarly, I never questioned my father about his life as a child, going to school and his early working life. Unlike my maternal grandmother who would enthral me with stories about her life on the farm and her family, my father was less talkative of his past. What I did learn about his early life came from general conversations with other family members,

or him talking with friends. He was not secretive; he just didn't talk about his family and growing up. I have a love of bonsai – so did my father – but I never knew that until thirty-five years after his death. Given the cameras and the darkroom equipment he had, my father must have enjoyed photography as well. But I never saw him use any of the darkroom equipment and it was a rare occasion when he used a camera.

Also in Chapter Three I discuss how those researched use their photographs to help record their family history. In our home photographs were kept, but very little was recorded about them. Even the oral history was not based on the photographic collection. This has become a problem for me in attempting to not only identify people in photographs, but also to understand the circumstances of the photographs, their more detailed narratives and the legacy I have inherited.

A Royal visit

In 1954 Queen Elizabeth II visited Adelaide. Before he died in 1968, my father gave me a black-and-white photograph (photo 27*)*. Seeing this picture recently in my photo album brought back the memories of many of my experiences of the young Queen's visit. My father coordinated the street decorations for the East End Market in the city. There were Union Jacks, Australian flags, and red, white and blue bunting adorning all the shops and strung across the streets to add to the royal mood of the city. Masonite-clad red and green arches stood as guarding sentinels. They looked like fairy castles and spanned the road where the Queen's parade would pass.

For the parade our family had a reserved place outside my father's office in Rundle Street east. I recall standing behind a line of soldiers with their rifles and bayonets, waving the Union Jack and the Australian flag. I think I saw a hat and a pale dress. It was a big black car and very shiny, and I remember being happy.



Photo 27 *From my father's collection (handed on to me), this is a photograph of one of the 'arches' for which he was responsible. While waiting for the Queen to arrive, I was fascinated by the drill of the soldiers lining the route. I was able to peer between the soldiers in line and see the Queen driven past.*

My childhood memory is that we children, and it appeared that our parents as well, had a strong British cultural heritage in the 1950s. We were proudly part of the British Empire. This was the first time the British monarch had visited Australia (Johnson, M 1984, p. 50). Prompted by this photograph (photo 27) I recall students at the primary school became embroiled in Royal fever. We marched, learnt the modified anthem of God Save the Queen, and the South Australian version of a make-believe National Anthem, The Song of Australia.[84] Our schoolyard games reflected the Coronation of the young Queen and her pending visit to Adelaide. The school participated in the rehearsal at the Wayville Show Grounds for the displays that were going to be entertaining the Queen and Duke during their visit.

At the showgrounds I took more notice of the photographers than I did of the events happening around me. Again I was the recipient of a 'whack' over the head from a teacher, an unjust reward in my eyes, for leaving the line of hand-

84 *Caroline Carleton (1811-1874) wrote the poem in 1859, for a competition sponsored by the Gawler Institute (Gawler is a country town about forty kilometres north of Adelaide) to celebrate its second anniversary. Carl Linger (1810-1862), who emigrated to Gawler in 1849 from Berlin, composed the music as part of the same competition.*

holding children to go and join the group of photographers standing nearby. One of these news photographers took my picture. For weeks I searched through every edition of the newspapers I could find, for the photograph. It was in vain.

Photographs of the world

A few times each year my father would treat me to a special 'father and son' outing, some of which I photographed. These included the Dawn Service on Anzac Day, going to a football match on Saturday afternoons, an early morning visit to the west parklands to watch the setting up of a visiting circus, and in 1959, to see 'The Family of Man Exhibition'. He showed me a story in the afternoon newspaper (see text box). The article was about a display of photographs being shown in Adelaide and my father asked if I wanted to see it. I have no clear recollection where in the Myer store the photographs were on display, but I do remember being crowded into a creaking lift with a lady in a uniform working the controls. The photographs were large, some taller than me, and others so wide that they took me ages to shuffle past them. My memory is that many of the pictures made me sad. The people in them did not look happy, and some looked very poor.

Photos of 68 Lands on View.

Here are some facts and figures about the 'Family of Man' photographic display now being held in Adelaide. It is on the first floor of the Myer Emporium in Rundle Street. It contains 503 photographs from 68 countries. The photographs range from 10 feet tall and 12 feet wide to 18 inches square. There are 40 sections in the display which is open from 9.5 (sic) am to 10 pm except on Saturday when the hours are 8.35 am to 9.30 pm.

From The News (Adelaide Newspaper) Tuesday June 30, 1959 p. 12

The one photograph that stuck in my mind was of a young girl playing a flute (photo 28). She became my photo-companion, and I could relate to this unknown girl, as I played the fife in our school 'drum and fife' band. During the past fifty years the image of this young girl has remained with me. She is forever a teenager, ageless, reminding me of my youth, and part-realised dreams. Some people had bought books and had sheets of paper with information about the photographs on them. Although I asked my father to

purchase one of the books he said he would think about it. I knew that meant no, but I was not all that upset[85].

During the trip back home I sat quietly thinking of the images I had seen[86]. I knew then that I wanted to be a photographer, but that was another of my secrets. There are a series of intersections and brief encounters that have emerged from my reflection on my life. As a young boy I was mesmerised by

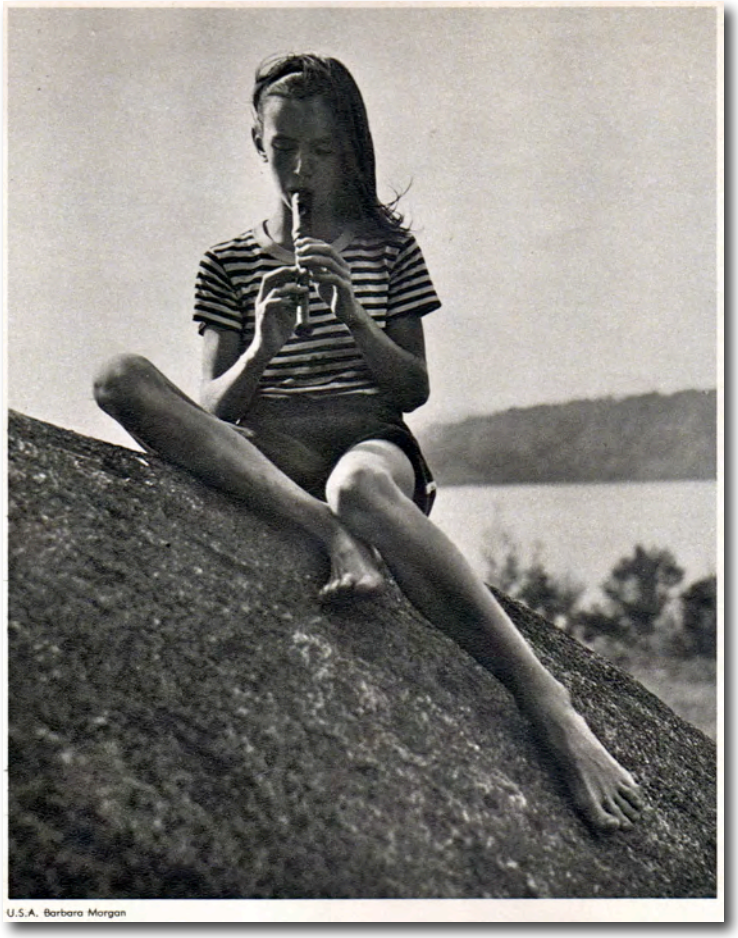

Photo 28 '*My' flute-playing girl however, it is obvious that the girl is playing a 'recorder' (Manson 1955, p. 98). In my memory it was a flute.*

85 *It was not until 2011 that I secured my copy of The Family of Man catalogue. My father-in-law, knowing of my interest, stumbled across a copy in a country second-hand bookshop. Skimming through its pages quickly I found the image of 'my girl' – it was as I remembered it.*

86 *The Family of Man In 1984, almost three decades after the exhibition opened, (Green, J 1984, Photography as popular culture: the family of man) The author notes, on page 50, that it 'opened to great critical acclaim'. However, with the value of time to reflect, the more modern consensus was that it was romantic and far too general and did not show the realities of life. In his essay, The Great Family of Man, Roland Barthes describes how he was not drawn by the individual images of the [Family of Man] exhibition on show in Paris, but clearly considered the holistic 'big picture' aspects of the collection (1957, Mythologies pp. 100-102). Some twenty-four-years later (1980) in Camera Lucida, Barthes has modified his general critique of photography, from his holistic view of the Paris exhibition, to discuss the detail of a single image to draw out what he explains as the punctum of a photograph.*

the one image. This memory has remained with me over the decades. That was my *punctum*, (Chapter One) and I now understand how this exhibition influenced my appreciation of photography and contributed to this odyssey. Unlike my experience, of those interviewed, all commented on various photographs that held a special memory, or was important – their *punctum.* Although I probed during the interviews no mention was made, by the participants, as to an image's impact on their appreciation of photography.

Home and photographic beginnings

In Chapter Two I discuss the preservation of the past, the family genealogy, for the future (a legacy) and how my research participants see that as having value:

> So, you know, there we are having our last Christmas lunch together, so you ... that sort of thing that's the value of photographs; there we are, a moment in time, happy, no knowledge of within five months he was going to kark it. Um so those kind of [events] they serve as some value in [memories] as well things that we did. (Interviewee John)

Similar to the experience of interviewee John, the following photographs and accompanying narratives are another example where using photographic autoethnography augments my legacy.

Our home was a place of happiness – despite normal family squabbles – and interesting daily events. Unfortunately very few photographs were taken of those moments. However, in working my through my first photo album there are a number of snapshots that rekindle my memories of family times together. Food preparation and meals were two of the catalysts for family gatherings. It was here that outings were planned, family news was passed on, gossip from the street was digested, and we spoke of our day's happenings. I loved watching my mother cook, especially fashioning her Cornish pasties. Family folklore was important in this cooking creation.

The recipe my mother used was apparently handed on from my father's mother who was given it from her mother. I never knew these women, as they had died before I was born. A picture of this mysterious old woman, my father's

grandmother, was in the drawer of the sideboard in the dining room. One picture was of a severe looking lady, dressed in black, who was my dead great-grandmother. My father told me she was a gentle person who laughed a lot. In my mind I had trouble linking the photograph (photo 29) with the few stories my father told me. She looked so different to the grandmother who lived with us.

Often, in many families, fact is coloured by tradition and the myths and stories that are told and re-told over the years. This is the case with the creation of my mother's Cornish pasty in the kitchen. While kneading the pastry she told stories about Cornish miners being quite superstitious and that there were conflicting anecdotes and rituals in eating the pasty. Apparently, in the tradition of family tales, these stories were passed on to my father by his grandmother (Louisa)[87] and then told to my mother. Apparently Cornish tin miners would take pasties with them underground for their meal. These tin mines were notorious for the high levels of arsenic underground. The miners would hold on to the pastry knobs and eat the pasty from the middle thus saving them from digesting the arsenic poison. The knobs would then be tossed away.



Photo 29 *One of the photographs kept in a drawer in the dining room of my childhood home. This was my great-grandmother. The photograph was taken in Moonta, SA in the mid 1890s.*

My father also claimed that this is where the term 'it's got knobs on it', meaning it was useless or

87 *Louisa Sweet (née Nicholls) was my great-grandmother. She was born in Blackwater, Cornwall about 1836. Louisa, also known as Ann, married John Sweet on February 14, 1857 in the Illogan Parish of Cornwall. John and Louisa Sweet departed Plymouth, England, on September 10, 1857 on board the Ship 'Caucasian' and arrived at Port Adelaide, South Australia on the 25th December 1857 – Voyage 57/13. Records held by the Mortlock Library, Adelaide, show John Sweet, Miner aged twenty-six years, Louisa Sweet, aged twenty years, and Elizabeth Sweet, Infant, six months, arrived from Cornwall, England. Louisa Sweet died in Adelaide on December 15, 1917.*

should be discarded, originated. To me as a child this seemed to be a reasonable explanation, and it is one of many myths and superstitions that adds colour to the history of the Cornish pasty. What is verifiable is that my great-grandmother, Louisa Sweet, née Nicholls, came from a Cornish mining family, and married a Cornishman who was a miner. Living conditions in Cornwall in the nineteenth century were harsh. Wives and children of the miners prepared 'the celebrated pasty', which when baked kept for a long period. Therefore, it was likely that Louisa would have been taught the family method of cooking the pasty as a child.

In Chapter Three I discussed the multi-faceted affiliation between the photograph and the narrative. The photograph of Louisa, which I claimed as a teenager and later placed in my photo album, is an example of this affiliation. It is more than an old picture of a deceased ancestor. Even though it is of a woman I never knew, this picture establishes my past and complements the myths and oral history of my family.

Weddings and other rituals

It has only been in the past twenty to twenty-five years that religious officials have begrudgingly allowed photographs to be taken inside a church. Even then there are strict conditions placed on the photographer, depending on the particular denomination of the church[88]. Historically, wedding photography has been a serious record of a serious event. Photographs were not originally taken in churches or on location, as the equipment was bulky, and the process of taking a photograph was slow, due to the long exposures required. With the cost of having professionally-taken images becoming more affordable from the mid 1800s to after World War II, the married couple accompanied by their attendants would go to a local photographic studio[89]. Again due to the long exposure times required for these early photographic records, the images were formal, stilted, severe and lacked spontaneity. This tradition of severity

88 *Being a wedding photographer for more than one-hundred weddings I have personal knowledge in this area.*
89 *My parents-in-law married in 1951, at the Lutheran Church in Freeling, a small country town north of Adelaide. The wedding party (no one else) travelled to Tanunda a distance of twenty-five km (fifteen miles) to a photographic studio for their wedding photographs to be taken. No family or friends had a camera at the wedding, or at the wedding breakfast later in the day.*



Photo 30 *My maternal grandparents, Merce and William Denton. They did not have any photographs of their wedding in 1885. When I was a child, my mother told me that this photograph was taken at my parents' wedding in April, 1927.*

underpinned wedding photography until the latter part of the twentieth century despite the photographic equipment becoming portable and the advent of reliable on camera or 'flash' lighting.

In the stories of her wedding, my mother told me that black was the formal wear for married women in the 1920s and that was why her mother is dressed in black. Now looking at these photographs I do not dispute my mother's review of the fashion of the day, yet I have always questioned these two photographs (photos 30 and 31).

The names of the people are correct, as far as I can determine. However, re-evaluating these images I suspect that the photograph of my grandparents (photo 30) was taken at an earlier time than my parents' wedding. Certainly the fashion of the clothes worn in this photograph suggests that it was taken in the late 1800s. Also the prints have been produced on different styles of photographic paper, and the photograph of my grandparents has been given a 'sepia' effect. On the back of this photograph, in my mother's handwriting are the names of her parents, but she



Photo 31 *My parents' wedding party, in April, 1927. My mother had written the names of all those in the photograph on the back of the print.*

has not recorded the date, location, or description of when and why the photograph was taken. The interview participants, often in our discussion, highlighted the lack of data recorded with the inherited family photographs. In many instances, they explained, while there may have been a name or a date on the back of a snapshot, nothing was documented about the circumstance of a photograph.

Sociologist, Annette Kuhn (1991 p, 23) states:

> Family photographs may affect to show us our past, but what we do with them – how we use them – is really about today, not yesterday.

These photographs and stories, among others, are my parents' legacy to me. A photograph can compete with acknowledged facts or others' understanding. As for these two images, whether or not they were taken at the same time is a moot point and, for me, not all that important. Being able to establish the identities of those involved, confirming that both images were taken between eighty and one-hundred years ago, and now to interrogate the social and cultural content is where their value lies. Allied to this analysis of the photographs is the more personalised oral history that they prompt, how they are viewed now, and then in the future. I discovered during the interviews that the lack of data available about the photographs that the participants have inherited has become the impetus for them to record narratives of their own collections.

Interstingly only four of those interviewed independently raised the issue of photographs at work. Interviewee Ann stated:

> There's gaps in mine [employment photographs] since my kids probably more in their teenage years [have them] – though having said that, you know, you've got the photo of them in their first work uniform.

As a child, I never saw any photographs of my father (Harold Sweet) working with his horses and covered wagon as a house-to-house greengrocer or, later in his life in an office setting. There are some snapshots of him during his World War II army service (photo 32), and a formal portrait of him wearing his 'Slouch Hat'. It was placed on the side of the mantelpiece in the family lounge room. I

now have that photograph and frame. Seeing this photograph pulls at my memories as a child.



Photo 32 *My father, Harold Sweet, c. 1943 whilst serving in the Australian Army. Probably taken in the Northern Territory.*

Over Easter 2013, I re-discovered a box of material my mother had packaged for me, prior to her death in 1996. Amongst an assortment of letters, photographs and other family memorabilia I found a negative that I later discovered was a photograph of my father when he had his own business as a home delivery greengrocer (photo 33). This photograph of my father as a young man took me back to my childhood. I remember the occasional stories he told of the draught horses, which pulled his dray. Although the barn, stables and other accoutrements of my father's pre-war business were at the back of our home, the horses and dray were gone. However, as a child I played in the barn and stables and was fascinated by the bridles, horse-shoes and other leftover trappings from my father's past. He sold the business when he enlisted in the army in 1941.



Photo 33 *My father, Harold Sweet, taken in the late 1920s probably in the south-eastern suburbs of Adelaide. I never knew him with hair.*

Nostalgia: bittersweet, pleasure, or pain

The complexity of nostalgia is often reflected in photographs. The story of Marc and Carol (Chapter Three) is a case in point. Marc, and to some extent Carol, struggle with the pang of what might have been had Marc been able to trace his biological father earlier in his life. Yet they share the pleasure in the discovery of Marc's past and being able to explore the life of his father and see that as being meaningful to their family (Routledge et al. 2011, p. 638). Commenting on her family photographs, interviewee Wendy stated: 'it's like the photos connect you so strongly back to a particular time'. However, I discovered in the research (Chapters Three and Five) that sometimes it is the absence of photographs that can add to the nostalgia, hidden truth and intrigue of family life. For interviewee Ted, the missing photographs recalled his bitterness and not feeling a part of the family: 'my step mum, kept none' (photographs of Ted as a child). The photograph has generally in the past been accepted as a

private recording of life that can be shared and celebrated in public. However, not all photographs do that; some produce embarrassment, shame and are not for public viewing (Gallop 1999, p. 73). These incidents in people's lives build on the oral history and links to other photographs can point to the re-remembered and nostalgic narrative.

Schoolyard memories

Most people cannot remember the first photograph taken of them. With the acceptance of the father now being at the birth of a couple's children, this sharing has progressed to some fathers taking photographs of the event. More often than not, these intimate images are not for public viewing. However, they do show the delicacy of the first moments of life, and the radiant joy of the new mother, thus becoming prized mementoes. Confinement and the growing popularity of photographically recording the birth are discussed in Chapter Four. The first memory I have of being photographed has both excitement and disappointment (photo 34).



Photo 34 *Me in 1953, Grade 1 school photograph at the Glen Osmond Primary School. I was disappointed with the black-and-white result.*

I have found from my research and personal experiences that just a single photograph will prompt and tease out so many other memories. Each image will lead the viewer to reminisce and travel to places other than those specifically rendered in a single picture. In Chapter Three I discuss the bruising

similarities between my experiences and those of the people I interviewed. The photographs and narratives provide a sense of belonging. Over time, viewing of my early photographs has become less frequent, but they remain as memory makers of primary school years and life in our home.

Primary school had a lasting impact on me, although not always positive. However, once a year the 'school photographer' spent a week taking photographs. For me this activity was exciting. Students sat at their desk or in wherever pose was in vogue for that year, and were snapped. Sometimes we would also have a piece of our class-work on display. It was one of these photo-events that is the first memory I have of being photographed. There are a few small black-and-white images of me taken before this photograph, but this is the one I remember. It is poignant in my recall. The excitement of being photographed with my schoolwork – coloured cut-out components of the Union Jack (the British not the Australian Flag, as we were British subjects back then) – and the disappointing result of a black-and-white picture (photo 34).

During these photographic sessions I would pester the photographer, asking if I could look at his or her camera, or help. This attracted the ire of the teacher who was supervising. Then, fuming quietly, I suffered a subsequent smack over knuckles, or around the ears. Recently seeing the cost of the photograph stamped on the back of one of the images reminded me that the week following the photographer's school visit my mother would tie three shillings and a sixpence into a corner of my handkerchief so I would not misplace the money – although I'm not sure how the handkerchief guaranteed any level of protection (photo 35). The few silver coins were for the purchase of one postcard-size photo. That night the photograph would be the talking point for the family – comments



Photo 35 *A stamp on the back of photographs showing the cost was common. c. 1955.*

on my untidy hair, crooked tie, shirt not tucked in, or my smile – would be bantered across the dinner table. The school photographs were never put in an album. Mum and Dad had never owned a photo album until years later when they were given one as new grandparents. Once viewed, these precious school photographs were placed with the other photographs in the sideboard drawer in the dining room. I do not remember the family looking at them again. However, I did, regularly.

A single photograph of a class of eight-year-old children prompts my memories of drifting through junior primary school, gradually learning what was required of me and progressing to the upper school, and into grade four (photo 36). This elevation in the school hierarchy was exciting because I could use the 'big' school library on Wednesday afternoons, borrow books, and take them home. Even so, once more I was disappointed. The single book in the library about photography was so old and damaged no one was allowed to borrow it.



Photo 36 *This is the only class photograph at primary school that included me. A teacher took the photo with a bellows camera in 1955. Later he produced one print for each of the children. I am in the back row, third from the left.*

Unlike the numerous school group photographs captured in the past thirty-five years, this is the only class photograph I have from all of my schooling. Sixty years later, looking at this photograph I can recall most of the others pupils'

names and remember our enjoyable times at school. Barry Wheaton, even as an eight-year-old was good at sports; Helen Robinson would faint at the sight of a drop of blood (I heard, from my mother years later, that she became a nurse) and Kym Batty and I would play marbles in the gravel on the footpaths after school. Participant Darlene Cooper, who is also in this photograph, has different memories prompted by the copy of this print that I sent to her[90].

The discussion on memory and visual media by Kuhn (2010, p. 311), and in this instance photography, is comprehensive. She states:

> Inquiry into personal and domestic photography and memory can, as we have seen, unlock doors to understanding not only the ethnography of everyday memory talk but also the workings of cultural memory across wider social-historical spheres.

These stories are just some of the memories that the few black-and-white photographs of my early years of schooling prompt for me. Yet the same photographs trigger different memories for others. Obviously I do not have pictures of every activity I pursued as a child. Nonetheless, the memories are generated and restructured each time a photograph of this period in my life is viewed. Together with my narratives these photographs provide that social-historical realm suggested by Kuhn (2010).

For me, those formative years established an emerging fascination with the photograph and photography in general. I now recognise that early attraction to photographs as romantic and innocent. In my naivety I did not understand the skill and knowledge required to produce even a 'nice' photograph. While my parents never openly encouraged my interest in photography, there was a modicum of support, but only as long as it remained a hobby. Photographs are more than prompts for what can be seen in the image. They are signposts to other events and recollections. In the introduction to this chapter I discussed the image below (photo 37) and also another image (photo 51) and every time I look at them, more memories surge forward.

90 *This anecdote was discussed in Chapter Two, An autoethnographic montage.*

In this image, being in my high school uniform also reminds me that I did the bare minimum at high school, and my parents were devastated by my school reports. This reflects my bitter-sweetness of nostalgia. In all our family discussions about a future working career, my success in the eyes of my parents and their friends was going to be measured by the job I 'won' when I left high school. Either I was going to have a profession, that is, work in a bank, post office, the government, or get a trade. Photographer and writer Jo Spence faced similar parental direction as they wanted 'something better' – than their factory jobs – for her (1988, p. 14). My inconsistent concentration at school did not garner any confidence from my parents that I could work without strong supervision. Photography as a vocation was not considered legitimate. Frustration, hurt and youthful shame of not being allowed to at least attempt to follow my dream of being a photographer is evoked by photo 37. My father, in his strong-willed manner, determined what I was going to do with my future employment after high school.



Photo 37 *This is one of three photographs of me in (High) school uniform. My father, using my Box Brownie camera, took this photograph and it is one of only a few photographs he took of me. 1960*

Although I only lived with my parents for sixteen years, I spent many hours unearthing treasures in cupboards and drawers in our home. In these secret places I would discover wonderful mysteries squirrelled away in a collection of repaired shoeboxes held together with sticky-tape and rubber bands. There were photographs of unfamiliar people: one unrecognisable image of my mother as a nine-year old, and some people it was whispered were dead, or even worse 'naughty'. I would regularly be admonished by my mother or father to: 'get out of those old dusty things, David, and stop nosing around' and 'nothing good will come of you looking at that silly stuff'. Yet the photographs were kept. None were ever thrown out. I now have most of these photographic artefacts and they add to my growing legacy. Regrettably this legacy to me is incomplete, as many of the narratives are missing.

Early family holidays

In general, we develop or construct our memories, particularly ones from early childhood through repeated stories of key moments by others, usually our parents or older family members. However I recall many of my early memories through a series of images. Some are captured as a photograph, others as pictures in my mind. This use of photographs in autoethnography is described as 'rich media' that can be used for reflection and reporting (Anderson, Leon & Glass-Coffin 2013, p. 69). The 'richness' of the following compilation of photographs and the generated memories from them are part of my history, whether oral or in other forms, and legacy.

Holidays became an unstated signal to take or save photographs. The first family holiday I can remember was a DC3 plane flight to Whyalla where we stayed with one of my mother's brothers and his wife (Ernest and Cath Denton). I was only four years old but I clearly remember the photographs of that trip. Uncle Ernest worked at the shipyards in Whyalla and rode a push-bike everywhere. The walls in the passage of their home were covered with framed pictures. Some were of places I vaguely recognised from the photographs my parents kept in the drawer in our dining room. There were people, strangers who I was told were relatives, and one photograph with 'lots of horses' pulling a

big wagon packed high with bags of wheat. My grandmother had a smaller, but similar 'likeness'[91] in the wooden box in her bedroom at home (photo 38). This image is one of about twenty photographs that I have inherited from my grandmother. It depicts a 'wheat harvest' about to be transported from the family farm to Ceduna for shipping to England. This photograph has a duality of memories for me, those of listening to my grandmother tell stories of her early life, and of my recollections of a holiday to Whyalla in 1951.



Photo 38 *Taken between 1918 and 1922 this is one of the 'likenesses' my grandmother had in her small photo-collection. It shows the team of nine horses used to pull the loads of wheat bags from the farm to the local port at Ceduna. Apparently my grandfather is the person standing by the rear wheel.*

This holiday continued on to Pt Lincoln where my parents and I stayed with my mother's younger sister Dulcie and her husband Jack Gillings. Whether the following story is my memory only, or from my mother's telling and re-telling her version of the holiday, I am unsure. This is explained by Schacter (2007, p. 134) as:

> Pre-schoolers may begin to mix together bits and pieces of different past episodes, or even intrude elements of fantasy and imagination …. parents can sometimes inadvertently suggest experiences to children, which actually never occurred.

However, it is now how I remember the sequence of events and subsequently narrate the story. One of my embarrassing childhood moments happened at

91 *The description 'likeness' was regularly used by my grandmother and others of her era when referring to photographs. I remember her saying that it was to distinguish them from pictures in magazines. [see footnote* 52, p. 156 *where 'likenesses' are also discussed.]*

the beautiful beach cove of Coffin Bay, a few miles from the town. It was the traditional Australian family picnic – rugs, sand, cordial, sandwiches, billy tea, and flies. There were two aspects of this picnic that have remained in my memory. Firstly, it was a re-enactment where the adults dressed in the style of clothes from some fifty years previously (photo 39). I have no memory of the reason for this re-enactment and searching the family records has not indicated a particular celebration or event around that time. The second memory prompt was, John, my cousin, who defecated in his shorts. While the hullabaloo went on I felt quite superior as he was almost six and older than me. I was most indignant on having to surrender my white cotton underpants for him to wear and I spent the remainder of the picnic in uncomfortable, rough serge pants. The photograph taken showing the adults at that picnic at Coffin Bay (photo 39) does not include me, or John. I refused to be photographed, as I was embarrassed. Yet my mother insisted on telling the story and showing the small faded picture to family members and friends, compounding my embarrassment for years afterwards. Some interviewees alluded to embarrassing moments, however only three openly discussed these events. In Chapter Two an un-identified participant discusses a photograph taken the day she first had sex. Also, in this chapter Darlene Cooper recalls an incident in primary school where she was embarrassed in front of the class. Then in Chapter Three, the narrative from Marc and Carol is of secrets and the envisaged embarrassment of Marc's mother.

Although I was never brave enough to tear up the offending photograph, I wedged it into a gap at the back of the drawer where all the other photos were kept. It remained there for more than forty years and was only re-discovered after my mother's death in 1996. My sister, Judith,



Photo 39 *My father's handwriting on the back of this picture just says 'Coffin Bay'. My memories from this now worn and dog-eared image, is that it was taken by my uncle as he had a camera on the day of the family picnic. I have vague recollections of the area, but I am unsure if these have been 'created' by my regular viewing of the photograph. c1951.*

inherited the furniture and in shifting it, the 'offending' photograph was found. Thankfully, I was able to tell her how it came to be hidden away and the story from the family picnic before it could be discarded.

The Riverland

With my parents I only had two other extended holidays as an older child. My picture taking at that time was basic. Little snaps of the river, a bridge, or a hotel where we may have spent a few nights. The first of these was in 1959 through the Riverland region of South Australia. I can remember the excitement of my first view of the mighty River Murray. It seemed so large in comparison to the creek (Glen Osmond Creek) that ran past our home. Our trip through the Murray region in the family's black 1938 two-door Chevrolet car, was both boring and exciting. To me as an 11-year old it seemed to take forever to get to the next town. Then each place was a new adventure.

I do not have any photographs of my parents or myself on that holiday. On reflection my reason for this anomaly is that I was visiting new and (to me) exotic places. With only eight negatives on a roll of film I was frugal in my picture taking. I photographed what was new rather than my parents whom I saw every day. It is a decision I now regret (*photo 40*).



Photo 40 *The Renmark Hotel, on the bank of the River Murray. Marks on the walls showed the height of the 1956 floods. Part of the family car, a black Chevrolet, can be seen in the middle left of photo.*

Mid-north and beyond

I have seven photographs of a holiday I had in 1960, with our neighbours the Wiltshire family. The two families travelled by car to Port Augusta and Quorn in the mid-north of the State. This journey became somewhat more interesting than the previous year's Riverland trip, as our neighbour's daughter Christine was also going on the holiday. We had grown up together, and it was a simple boy-girl relationship as she was almost a sister to me. Having her there made it special and my small collection of photographs of this holiday revive many of my childhood memories.

Everything about the holiday was enjoyable. The overnight camping, sleeping in a tent, having billy tea heated over an open fire on the side of the road in the mid mornings and late afternoons, being able to explore, seeing wild kangaroos, emus, and a snake, are my memories, which are enhanced by the photographs. Canvas water bags were tied to the front of both cars and the water from them was crisp and cool (photo 41).



Photo 41 *Our campsite at Stirling North (Pt Augusta). My parents are on the right and the other four people are the Wiltshire family. Note the 'water bags' hanging on the front of the two cars. There were no caravan parks, or campsites provided then. Travellers selected a spot on the side of the road and set up their tents.*

My father explained that the evaporation of the water seeping through the pores of the canvas kept the water cool. I didn't quite understand the physics, but I enjoyed drinking the cold water from the damp bag. This was my first experience of the Australian outback. The vast distances, the colours, and the sheer grandeur of the country were inspiring. In the 1950s, camping facilities were almost non-existent; also the roads in South Australia were narrow, winding and often unsealed. The effort to go on a camping holiday was considerable when compared to the services available in the twenty-first century. More than fifty years later I still recall that sense of wonderment I experienced as a child, each time I travel through the Australian outback. Although Sontag (1977, p. 8) defines photography as 'a rite of family life', as a thirteen-year-old I was disappointed with the few photographs of that holiday I shot. Intuitively I knew my Box Brownie camera would not capture the beauty I could see in each scene. It was on this holiday that I discovered that my father had his own camera and he promised that I could use it on special occasions.

A second camera

I recall that some weeks after returning from this holiday my father produced his seldom-used camera (photo 42). Although I had seen him use this camera possibly less than a dozen times in the past it never occurred to me that it was 'his' camera.

After the interminable lecture on values, looking after it, and a plethora of other rules, he handed it to me. As I remember the moment, my fingers tingled and I could smell the leather that covered the metal frame, musty

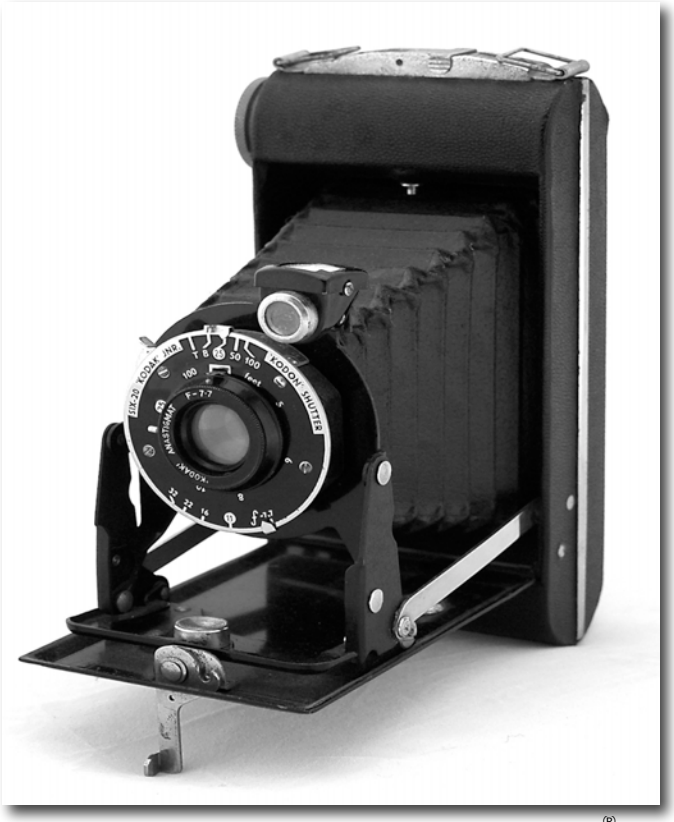

Photo 42 *My father's' camera, a Six-20 Kodak Jnr ®. This camera was manufactured in the UK between 1933 and 1939.*

from years being kept hidden from my prying eyes, in the back of his wardrobe. For me this was a marvel of engineering. I had seen photographs of cameras like this, and a few times with the school photographers or newspaper photographers I had seen larger and more complex equipment. Now I had something special, a folding or bellows, Six-20 Kodak Jnr camera[92]. While it took the same type of film as my Box Brownie, with this camera I could adjust the shutter speeds, the aperture, and it had limited focusing abilities as well. However, for any night-time flash photography I still had to use the Box Brownie. I was more than happy though – I had two cameras.

Secrets and missing photos

The research participants often discussed stories of secrets, lost, missing or destroyed photographs (Chapter Three). Here the story of Marc and Carol revealed a half-century secret, of his mother, eventually revealed through one photograph. With missing images, I did not determine from the research any specific thread in how these family snaps became 'lost'. What I did find was a universal sadness and longing because of this gap in their personal history. Often the memories associated with these lost images are intense (Novak 1998, p. 27). Discovering some small black-and-white photographs of my mother as a nine-year-old schoolchild and of the family farm, I searched for a more



Photo 43 *My mother aged nine years sitting on the right next to the chalkboard. The head teacher, Mr Picker, was killed in the Great War (pencil note on back of photo in my mother's handwriting).*

92 *This Kodak camera was manufactured under British Patents and was made between 1933 and 1939. I still have this camera.* http://kodak.3106.net/index.php?p=217&cam=1542

recent photograph of ‘Sideview’, the property on which my mother spent her childhood.

With this following story I cannot claim any righteous ground in being a ‘truth teller’. For me it was the continuing mystery, a challenge to be solved. Yet I take some solace in that I found: ‘a way to transfigure silence into talk that counts’ (Poulos 2009, p. 16). In 1998 my wife and I camped at Ceduna[93] and spent some time exploring the local history. I wanted to see where my mother grew up and went to school at the hamlet called Charra. While there is little remaining of the former school, I felt closer to my mother there than I had in many years. The damaged image (photo 43) taken in 1913, is the only school photograph I have of my mother. All that is left of the school building is a few stones from the foundation and a sign giving some brief historic information.

On seeing the surrounding flat land, its dryness, the former ‘Denton family’ farm, ‘Sideview’ *(*photo 44*),* I came to appreciate the harsh times she and my grandmother (and the family) must have endured a century previously. These photographs drew me back in time to my parents’ home and for me a confusing incident, although I understood something monumental was happening. It was about 1955; I was seven or eight years old and had been sent to my bedroom. That predicated one of two dramas. Either I was going to get the wooden spoon around my legs, or there was adult ‘stuff’ going on that excluded me. Minutes before my banishment, I had opened the front door of our home to find a huge black man standing there. Any adult



Photo 44 *The former Denton family farm – ‘Sideview’, which is adjacent to the Charra school site. This is the property where much of the early part of this story took place. November 22, 1998.*

93 *Ceduna is a coastal town on the far west coast of South Australia, now known for commercial and recreational fishing, oyster farms and tourism.*

was huge to me then. Having growing up in a white middle-class suburb of Adelaide this was the first dark skinned person I had seen. Before he uttered a word I had run back through the hallway to the kitchen where my mother and grandmother were sitting and talking, yelling: 'Mum! Mum! There's a black man at the door!' Standing behind my grandmother's skirt I peered around her slight frame and tried to follow the adult conversation. The unexpected visitor was quickly dispatched to the back door and that is when I was sent to my bedroom. I asked why he was sent to the back door and had not just come inside. My grandmother's curt reply was: 'He's black, and they go to the back door'.[94]

Being a nosey little boy, I had crept out of my temporary prison and hid under the kitchen table, my special place. My mother and grandmother spoke with this unfamiliar man through the fly-wire covered back door for some time. I could not follow the conversation between the adults, but sensed that it was terse and quite unfriendly. I repeatedly heard the man call my grandmother 'Grandmamma'. She would reply with an emphatic 'no!' The door was never opened and eventually this enigmatic visitor was sent away. The last I saw of him was standing at our gate looking back at me (I had snuck out on to the front veranda). He waved, I waved back, and he walked to the footbridge that spanned the creek at the end of the street. I never saw him again. The incident was never discussed in my presence; any enquiry by me was shutdown immediately.

My fantasy was that he had come from an exotic country, was my pirate uncle and had an exciting and colourful life of danger and adventure. Often in my regular rummaging through the dining room drawer I would borrow my grandmother's magnifying glass to peer intently at the pictures. They were old and dark photographs. Frequently it was difficult to identify the people in them and yet I continued in hope to stumble across my mystery black man. My search was one of my secrets, but I never saw a photograph of this mysterious man.

94 *Over the years of listening to the family stories of life (more than one-hundred years ago), about farm life at Charra on the far west coast of South Australia, I am able to make some assumptions as to why my grandmother and mother insisted that this visitor go to the back door. Whether the 'blacks' [sic] were Aboriginal stockmen or small groups from the local tribes who visited the farmhouse, they were welcomed, but only at the back door. The stockmen would be paid in food rations (not money) and the local Aboriginal visitors would be given food parcels.*

By 1998 my mother had died. My wife Pam and I had been living in Perth for almost five years. On a caravan holiday returning to Perth from Adelaide we called into Port Lincoln and spent some time with my aunt, my mother's younger sister. Dulcie was 86 and was a sharp-witted, warm and funny woman. Without giving any details, she alluded to a bit of a wild youth so I used the opportunity to ask about my mystery man, the visit that never happened. She cocked her head to the side and said: 'well, I never, how did you know about that?' While I was relating the story of the visit and the subsequent denials, I could see her thinking, considering how much if anything she would tell. I stopped talking and sat quietly. She said nothing and the silence was heavy. She smiled, patted me on the leg and then said: 'well, I guess it is water under the bridge now; everyone who matters is dead anyway'.

All she would tell me was that her brother's (my uncle's) wife had an affair with an Aboriginal stockman. From that relationship she had a son, her fourth of five children. Apparently this son was the 'big black man' who visited my parents' home some forty years earlier. No other information was forthcoming, but I had my mystery partly solved. However, the event of decades earlier must have stirred up some memories for Dulcie. Then, almost as a thought out loud, she spoke quietly: 'the Browns, she was a Brown you know, and Gil[95] brought him up as his own'. I asked if there were any photographs of the family that included the Aboriginal child, however the subject was never mentioned again during our discussions about the family history.

A few days after this visit we had driven west to Penong. Stopping for morning tea and a casual browse through the Penong Station Woolshed 'history centre' I accidentally discovered a book that over the next four years helped to solve the mystery of my 'black man'. Amongst many of the books in the back room of the 'centre' I noticed a title and something triggered in my memory – Brown – the name Dulcie mentioned when talking about her sister in-law, and what she called: 'a difficult time for the family?' By chance I held another clue to the

95 *Gilbert (Gil) William Denton, born September 17, 1886, died November 10, 1950, married Mignonette Agnes Olive Brown, and was a farmer at Ceduna. Gil, my uncle, was an elder brother to my mother and aunty Dulcie. The progeny of the 'affair', a male child, was adopted by Gil and brought up as his own.*

mystery in my hands. I scribbled a few notes and we continued our journey westwards[96].

Some weeks later through an inter-library loan request, I had a copy of the book *The chronicles of John Brown and John Lowe* (1985) from the University of Melbourne. While there were details about the lineage of the various families amongst its pages, the stories and information about the individual people were limited. As to my aunt, Mignonette Agnes Olive 'Minnie' Brown (photo 45), what was written covered a little of her schooling, and there was a brief mention of her love of horses and of her married life. The records in this book showed Lawrence Denton, who might have been my 'black man', being the fourth child of Minnie and Gilbert Denton. There were no details of Lawrence's life or background, nor were there any photographs of the children of Minnie Denton (Brown, Brown & Kenny 1985, pp. 89-93). I returned the book somewhat disappointed. The complete story remained out of my reach. However I had some links to some basic information and a copy of Photo 45 on the Western Australian Genealogy Website (WAGS). My desire to solve this mystery was twofold. The first was one of discovery and unravelling the family secret. Then I wanted to understand the context of the illicit relationship, the 'historical setting' that this innocent child was subjected to, and its evolution over time (Wexler 1999, p. 250).

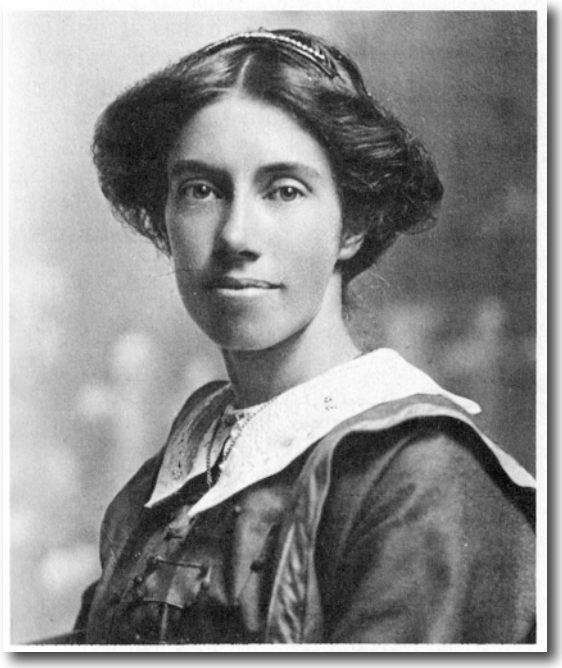

Photo 45 *Minnie Denton, née Brown, mother of five children including the mysterious black man and my aunt (Brown, D, Brown, A & Kenny, 1985).*

In June 2002 I received an email message from Elizabeth (Liz) Joraslafsky[97], then living in Mataranka, Northern Territory. Liz and her siblings had been brought up

96 *Sweet, D 1998, Research and travel notes, Penong, November 22, 199 (personal holding).*
97 *Liz contacted me after a search on the WAGS' website where I was listed as a member, with a summary of my research interests.*

in various orphanages and foster homes in and around Adelaide in the 1950s and 1960s. She had discovered that her father was Lawrence Brian Denton, the adopted son of Gilbert Denton. Following an exchange of emails and letters we confirmed that Liz (and her siblings) were second cousins to me through marriage and adoption, and the grandchildren of Minnie Brown. My big 'black man' had been found.

These family secrets, which I researched over a number of years, are the 'lived experience of the ethnographer' and move beyond the participant observation and into interpretation of '[my] emotional and spiritual life' (Quinney 1996, p. 357). For me it is the absence of photographs that adds to the futility and sombre aspects of my family's embarrassment and racist story. I question how the 'family' would have reacted if Lawrence's father had been white? Would the 'affair' have even been discovered? My family for decades avoided the truth and hid our family history. While there are a small number of photographs of our family members in the early part of the twentieth century, there are none of Lawrence Denton. Would he have been photographed or included in photographs if he had been white? Lawrence's mother's family, the Browns, acknowledged his existence but not his Aboriginal heritage in their family chronicle. Again no photographs of him seem to have been kept. In an email, Liz stated:

> I am sorry but I never knew my parents, as I was a foster child. None of us have any photos of the parents. The only existing photo was destroyed when my sister's marriage finished and her ex destroyed all the photos. (Joraslafsky 2011)

While I have thrown away poor photographs – those out of focus or blurred – I have never deliberately destroyed an acceptable image. For me the photographs (photos 43, 44 and 45) are special and have become strong memory prompts to my mother, the six decades of mystery and those connected to the events. Each time I look at these images I am drawn to my childhood memory of this uninvited man at our front door. The despair of no photographs, for whatever reason, may lead to secrets and lies and transcend time. Why have I told this story? In trying to make sense of family secrets Poulos (2009 p.35) states:

> A need to know is transformed into a need to tell, that, in the end, offers a new kind of healing, available only through the magic of story.

Not knowing who the strange visitor to the family home was frustrated me for five decades. Then, once knowing some of the story, the secrecy was broken and I felt comfortable in telling the story. Yet this childhood experience remains a rueful nostalgic moment and for Liz Joraslafsky it may be the 'talk that counts'.

The nostalgia of simpler times

It is argued by Buckridge, (1991, p. 131) that the term 'nostalgia' has undergone a significant shift in meaning and:

> Nostalgia now seems to refer almost exclusively to those cultural texts and practices, which cultivate the pleasure of an imaginary return to a familiar past time.

Applying this premise, the nostalgic manner in which I view my photographs and specifically recall my first years of employment is pleasurable. Apprehensive, nervous, excited – two busloads of eager teenage boys were starting out on an amazing adventure. We had been accepted as cadets for the three-year (five phases) training course in the SA Police Academy at Fort Largs[98]. Early that Thursday morning, my father had driven me and Robert (Rocky) Stone, my mate and neighbour, to the Police Barracks at Thebarton. Our names were checked off and about 100 teenage boys were herded on to buses for the fifty-minute trip to another world. In my memory, the three years at the Police Academy are corralled by challenges of learning respect, tradition, and history – a pleasurable nostalgia. The aspect of pleasure and nostalgia is described by Holak and Havlena (1998, p. 222) as:

> The positive association of pleasure with nostalgic intensity illustrates the essentially positive nature of nostalgic experience.

I re-experience similar nostalgic pleasures each time I look at my photographs of my time at the Fort Largs Academy and the memories they help to recall. It was January 2nd, 1964; I was sixteen and had left home to join the Police

98 *Fort Largs is a nineteenth century coastal army facility, taken over by the SA Government and became the model of excellence in police training in Australia. On December 14, 2011 the 240th and final Course of Probationary Constables graduated from the old Academy, which opened for police training in 1961. Approximately 8,000 Cadets completed their training there before graduation. The new training facility has been built adjacent to the old fort (Conlin, T 2011, Police move to a new fortress).*

Force. The last person off the bus, as my feet hit the hot asphalt I was screamed at for being tardy. The bullish Drill Sergeant reminded me very quickly I was a dirty little twerp and that he would break me, get me out of my slovenly habits, and make a man of me. The romantic adventure dimmed somewhat. Sergeant Fred Knight was a former Royal Guardsman, a past he never let us lowly cadets ever forget. For the next three-and-a-half-years he marched us, doubled us, yelled at us and wielded us into a smart, snappy, coordinated group (Course 9/3/64), which moved and drilled with precision.



Photo 46 *One of the exciting activities for a teenage boy was the pistol shooting practice at a local Army shooting range (Deane Range).*

We debated and danced, studied law and police procedures, partnered Adelaide's debutantes for their social events, learnt to box, practised the basics of self-defence and were taught the correct use of firearms (photo 46). Learning to ride the police greys (horses) was one of the many highlights of my time at the Academy. Training with the Emergency Operations Group, as it was then known, was demanding and challenging (photo 47). My collection of photographs from these three-and-a-half years at the Academy tell a story, resurrect my memories and prompt the 'war stories' at irregular reunions.

Sergeant (Ernie) Kirk taught typing and photography. The collective groan from my fellow cadets when we had our photographic lessons was almost as loud as the clatter from the typing classes. I was in my element however. He taught us about depth of field, 'f'-stops, exposure, the rule of thirds (in photography), all things photographic and he persuaded me to buy my first SLR camera. He had perfected what he called, the 'Kirk-o-metre'. This was a simple device we made in the classroom. Three circles of cardboard, each one smaller than the other,

were cut out and pinned together through their centres, the smaller circles on top of the larger. On these cut-outs were the various film speeds, shutter speeds, and lens apertures (f-stops). By moving the circles of cardboard the result was a simple, but effective guide to exposure. While most of my fellow cadets tossed Sergeant Kirk's cardboard creation into the rubbish-bin, I used this device for many years. It eventually wore out, but then I had a camera with a built-in light meter.



Photo 47 *1965, this photo was taken with my camera, showing me abseiling at the (then) SA Police Emergency Operations Training Centre, Echunga.*

Ernie Kirk had a dry sense of humour, but was brutally honest. He bluntly let me know that my photography was garbage and I had better learn to take some good photographs quickly or he wouldn't waste his time with me. Looking back on those memorable days I now realise that this was his way of challenging me and inspiring me to do better. It worked; I graduated with the best personal results in all subjects (photo 48).

Thanks to Sergeant Kirk with his repetitious typing lessons, I can touch type with reasonable accuracy, and his quirky ‘Kirk-o-metre’ taught me to judge shutter speeds and exposures in my head to get a specific result in a photograph. High praise from Sergeant Kirk was him looking at a photograph and emitting a ‘harrumph’. I got three ‘harrumphs’ in my final phase of training at the academy.



Photo 48 *The majority of Course 9 as Probationary Police Constables, prior to our Graduation Parade, July 1967. I am the first standing on the left.*

Innocence lost

Australia Day 1966; headlined by the media as the 'Beaumont Children’, sisters Jane and Arnna, with their younger brother Grant, travelled unaccompanied by an adult and spent the morning at Glenelg beach. They have never been seen since. It was not uncommon to see children travelling alone in the 1950s and 1960s. A decade or more earlier than this, as a child, I would regularly walk alone to kindergarten, the shops, to school, or catch a tram into the city.

During the week to ten days following the Australia Day holiday, together with more than 100 other police cadets, I helped in the search for the missing children. The sandhills to the north of Glenelg were scoured, drains checked, houses door-knocked, and every conceivable hiding place discussed by senior police officers, or speculated on by journalists, was searched. On February 3,

1966, the Patawalonga boat haven was searched for the bodies of the children. At low tide the wooden lock gates were closed, and while police divers searched the deeper water near the lock, a line of police cadets oozed our way through the often waist-deep mud, feeling for bodies[99] (photo 49). We found nothing.

The media were in a frenzy. Besides wild speculations, claims and rumours, television news cameras and photographers captured every possible activity. While I concentrated on my job as a searcher, I could not avoid observing the photographers go about their role. After our third day of searching, I asked our sergeant if I could take my camera and photograph the cadets searching. The immediate rebuff was peppered with some colourful phrases: 'Bloody hell Sweet, who the fuck do you think you are – Cecil B. DeMille[100]?' I thought it best not to point out that my camera was a 'still', not a movie; no matter, it stayed in my locker at the academy.



Photo 49 *Police Cadets searching for the Beaumont children in the Patawalonga, January, 1966. I am one of the cadets in this photograph.*

We cadets had our photographs[101] taken by the media photographers and a few were printed alongside the extensive newspaper articles. Many of the search activities appeared in the black-and-white television news stories broadcast each evening. Interestingly these images still reappear in the media whenever

99 http://www.beaumontchildren.com/beaumontTheSearch.html *last accessed February 3, 2012.*
100 *DeMille was a well-known Hollywood filmmaker of the previous fifty years.*
101 *Photograph* 49 *is one of a number that are reused each time the missing Beaumont children mystery is raised in the media. This copy was sourced from The Moments in Time insert into the Adelaide Advertiser, Part One, September 10, 2006 p. 9.*

a lead or speculation about the Beaumont Children and their disappearance is rehashed. The grief from this crime lingers in my memory. My pain is not from a personal relationship with the family, but for the three little children and the continuing mystery of their disappearance. In discussing a family's distress through displacement, Lorre suggests: 'grief or nostalgia, may be analyzed in terms of melancholy, as opposed to mourning', (2002, p. 5). Almost half a century on I cannot look at this and other photographs taken at the time without a feeling of sorrow, distress and melancholic nostalgia.

With some regret

It was through the Boy Scouts, as a teenager, that I realised that there was a world outside of school and my neighbourhood. The Scout camps and hiking were fun, and I learnt the importance of teamwork and friendship based on respect and understanding. I met other teenagers from different places: interstate and overseas. Through airmail letters I 'pen-palled' with one other Scout, Jim Brown, in the United States. Communications were slow, often taking weeks between our exchanges, but the excitement of a letter waiting for me when I arrived home in the afternoons was exceptional. I now regret that over time, starting work, and shifting homes Jim and I lost touch with each other.



Photo 50 *Jim Brown c. 1962, my American Boy Scout pen pal who also had an interest in photography – I regret not keeping in touch with him.*

Although separated through distance, we had similar interests and exchanged stories of our lives, and a few photographs for about five years. I was very impressed and a little jealous – all of Jim's photographs were in colour. I had, at that stage, never purchased a colour film, nor had a colour photograph of myself. The

picture he sent to me was my first colour photograph (photo 50). I now wonder what he thought of the home 'bathroom/darkroom' printed black-and-white photograph I sent to him, (photo 37) and if he still has it? Occasionally during the past fifty years I have thought about Jim. What became of him; did he get conscripted into the American forces and if so did he survive Vietnam? Sadly, I will never know. As discussed in Chapter Four, I experience a conflict of warm memories with some sadness – this is the complexity of nostalgia. Having the photograph of Jim prompts my recall of those happy boyhood times. While I no longer have contact with him it is through this colour photograph, my story and legacy that he will survive.

Closing the family home

When my mother moved to a home unit in 1979, this is the only photograph I took of the old home – the front veranda (photo 51). I considered photographing each room, but my mother was quite emotional and didn't want photographs to remind her of the half century she had spent there. At the time my intent was to have a photographic record of the (former) family home. However, I now realise that what I wanted to capture was memories (Wilton 2011, p. 61). With hindsight I should have ignored my mother's request, even if it was to settle an argument between my eldest nephew, Bruce, and myself.



Photo 51 *The family home. Taken on the day my mother (a widow) moved into a unit. This had been her home for 52 years. February, 1979.*

Recently at a family gathering he brought up the photographs that my parents had on display. He was adamant that a photograph of my father in his army uniform was on the mantelpiece in their bedroom. I was equally adamant that it was on the mantelpiece, but in the lounge room. However, our recollections of the actual image were similar. I knew I could win that part of the argument as the photograph we were discussing I now have on display in my home – a part of my inherited photographic legacy.

This late night exchange with Bruce sent me back to my collection of old photographs that had been taken at the Myrtle Bank home. Now I look at them with a different eye to discover what is in these photographs that could jolt my memory. There are a number of images taken in the front yard, or on the front veranda, including both my sister's pre-wedding photographs. All of these photographs provide little bumps; no startling revelations, just those, 'oh yes' or 'of course' moments of memory. There are very few photographs taken inside the home. This was partly due, I expect, to the cost of flash photography and infrequency of its use in the 1950s and 1960s.

Three images I did find are of my nephews Robin[102] (deceased) (photo 52) and his brother Brett (photo 54) with my mother. She had been looking after her grandchildren for a few hours and my young nephews were being bathed in a plastic bowl in the kitchen. Reading the caption of these adjacent snapshots provides some basic information as to when the photograph was taken and the people in them. These are the only photographs I ever shot in the family kitchen, where so much of our life, family interaction, exchanges of stories and information, and of course cooking took



Photo 52 *My nephew Robin. Some of the memory prompts can be seen in the background. December, 1959.*

102 *Robin (Brett's older brother) was a groomsman for Pam and me at our wedding in 1976. He died the following Christmas Eve from a heart attack brought on by asthma. Robin was nineteen.*

place. It had been the centre of our home and these photographs trigger many memories.



Photo 53 *My mother with my nephew, Brett. The cupboards and bread tin also drive my memories. June, 1959.*

In photo 53 my mother was 55 years of age when I took this happy snap with a flash attached to my Box Brownie camera. While younger than I am now, to me she was an old woman. Behind her, in the photograph, is a cream painted tin breadbox. It had belonged to my father's mother. For almost one hundred years, bread had been kept fresh in its dark interior. The lid slid up and this is where after school I would pick at the warm ends of the loaves or hack off a thick crusty slice of bread and plaster it with dripping. In Chapter Four I discuss the incongruence between how I enjoyed 'bread and dripping' as a treat and for interviewee Paul it was all there was to stave off severe hunger.



Photo 54 *Brett and my mother. The kitchen was her domain. December, 1959.*

Remembering this story has prompted me to tell my nephew, Brett, who now has the tin breadbox, of its history. There are a number of family memorabilia shown in these images that have dragged up long buried memories. The electric clock (photo 52) – in 1955 when it was purchased – was a modern piece of technology. We were the only

family in the street to have such a marvel. Below the clock, stuck on the wall, is a red and white ‘Father Christmas’ plastic mask. I now display this mask in our home at Christmas.

In the back corner of this image, placed on the counter top, is a cane thermos and picnic hamper. This photograph prompted memories of my mother as a consummate craft-maker. She had woven this ‘basket’ as one of her many creations. My father cut out the plywood base and drilled the holes with a hand drill around its edge for the lengths of cane to be secured and my mother did the weaving. This picnic basket carried hot tea, soup and other delights to picnics, afternoons at the football and family gatherings. I still have memories of lengths of thin cane soaking in the bath to make them supple for weaving.

In photo 54, Brett who is now in his fifties, loved to perform for the camera as a baby, but now shuns having his photograph taken. There are so many memories that these three images resurrect. One such memory that I occasionally recall was when I was about fourteen, being caught by my father kissing a girl who was sitting on the kitchen table. He was angrier with the girl sitting on the table than he was with me kissing her. Another was as a teenager helping my father build the cupboards in the kitchen. The face of the doors and drawers are Masonite from the dismantled decorative ‘arches’ used in the 1954 Royal visit (photo 27). Beyond the kitchen window is the sleep-out where I had my bedroom and played as a child. These three images construct more memories, stockpiling them, with each one snowballing into the next, and transcending the years.

The dining room

Throughout my life, there have been numerous moments of significance. Arguably the most meaningful have been the birth and lives of my children and now their children. However, within the frame of the ethnographic research from my participants, this photographic autoethnography is cast with some stories of my childhood and early teenage years. I regularly looked at pictures that were secreted away in drawers and boxes in my parents’ home. This was my early life and my first snapshot (excuse the pun) of the world and it started in

the family dining room. This is the room where the family celebrations were held: birthdays, family dinners, Christmas lunches and scrumptious meals when special guests visited. Being the youngest, I was always placed at one of the legs of the highly polished oval dining room table, but close enough to dad, so he could reach me if I misbehaved.

These childhood recollections together with later experiences in life are my story. The photograph has always been there – sometimes it is the core of the narrative while in other events it is an almost forgotten adjunct to the story. However, for me it is the combination of photographs and the stories they prompt that continues to govern the memories and re-remembered events of my past. These memoirs combine the mysteries of the darkroom and the debatable history of the Cornish pasty with family secrets, daily life and celebrations. The two poor quality photographs (photos 55 and 56) were hand printed in the makeshift darkroom in my parents' bathroom. Taken in the dining room of the family home they are important to me for two specific reasons. Firstly and most obviously is for the people in it. There are four generations here: my grandmother, my mother, my two sisters, and their (then) three children. Until recently it was the only photograph that I was aware of that show those four generations.



Photo 55 *Four generations of my family. The dark shape of the sideboard can be seen in the background. This is where I spent many hours looking at my parents' collection of photographs. February 7, 1959.*

When my sister Judith died, a similar colour photograph was found amongst her collection of images. I had forgotten about it being taken – by me. Bob Stephenson, my brother-in-law, allowed me to use his 35mm camera that had a colour film in it. I had overlooked the experience and have no recall of ever seeing the photograph until recently. Adding to the importance that this discovery has to our family history is that these images were taken for my grandmother's 90th birthday celebrations. I am the eleven-year old photographer and whilst I am not in the image, I was there and it is part of my heritage. In fact that is not strictly correct. In the colour photograph (photo 57), I can be seen in the reflection from the mirror in the background – if you enlarge the digital scan of the print enough.

It is with mild embarrassment now that I remember how unskilled I was in taking photographs. With my own Box Brownie camera it was held at waist level to look through the viewfinder before taking a photograph. I had done the same when using a 35mm camera to take this picture. Hence it is off-centre and skewed. The second reason that these photographs have value for me is where it was taken. For all the hours I spent in the dining room, searching the drawers, and looking at the numerous photographs stuffed into the sideboard, these are the only photographs taken there that I have.



Photo 56 *My grandmother's ninetieth birthday, photographed in the dining room of the family home. My photographic skills were rather basic at the time. February 7, 1959.*



Photo 57 *The forgotten photograph, and probably the first colour photo I took. Here are four generations of our family, from the eldest, 90 years to the youngest 9 months. 1959.*

Conclusion

Although I readily recall many of these events, it is the photographs that provoke a greater level of detail and enhance my recollections. The photograph is a memory maker. The three photographs (photos 52, 53, 54) showing aspects of the kitchen is one example. They accentuate my memories of life in our home, help me recall the aroma of the Cornish pasties as they baked in the wood fired stove and show some examples of my mother's skill at craft making. Also linked to those photographs and photo 27 is my early memory of a Royal visit. Many years later in my professional life this memory is interrelated with a number of unique experiences where I provided communication management and media liaison during state visits to South Australia.

As a young Baby Boomer in the 1950s and early 1960s I grew up in a family where stories were told and retold. Many of these tales I have remembered, but I cannot escape the influence and impact that photography has had in this memory making. There is always a story associated with the photograph, as well as the scene and time it depicts. Through my eyes as a child I recall attending my first photographic exhibition. Although I have immersed myself in the 'Family of Man' catalogue in more recent years, the intensity of my memory is through just one photograph – a young girl sitting on a rock playing her recorder. While other images from the exhibition have faded over time, this single photograph has stayed with me for more than half a century.

Whether it was experiencing the excitement of leaving home at sixteen to live in barracks at the Police Academy, or some years later as a serving officer in a third world police force, my camera was there. Even after leaving the corporate world where photography played a part, the camera continues to influence my life. Each photographic experience unlocks a different succession of memories, and adds to my oral history, my stories and my legacy.

> *Yeah, at the moment I'm doing my memoirs into an album so I'm mucking up the album I've done on myself by dragging the photos out. I'm deciding whether I want original photographs in, or whether I want to do copies and put them in, but I'm writing out my memoirs and I'm adding the photos now, as I go. And I've got to work out a way of preserving that, and I'm hoping out of everything I've gone though, at least the family might want to keep it. I imagine they would. The way I feel about things anyway, maybe my grandchildren might be interested?*
>
> Interviewee Mavis

Similar to Mavis (above), throughout this research I keep returning to the question: 'what is going to happen to these photographic collections in the future?' Researchers have written about family-based photography since the first cameras excited the world. Lamentably the Australian Baby Boomers and their extensive photographic collections are not a significant part of this body of knowledge. Now that the elder Baby Boomers are in their mid-sixties my research has shown that it is opportune to ensure that there is a lasting legacy of these family photographic collections. This can be accomplished through critical reviews, research, and the collection of oral histories and life-writing. By using Baby Boomers' family photographic collections as the basis for this research, I have shown that they are significant cultural, social and historic artefacts for future generations to contemplate. The bulk of these albums and assortments cover the post-World War II period when family photography became affordable and popular. Furthermore, many Boomers have a legacy of family photographs from their parents and grandparents. This proffers a strategic and longer-term study than just this research and thesis.

The Baby Boomer generation is large and wide-ranging in population size, age and experiences. For those born or raised in Australia, this is the first generation to have had relatively easy access to inexpensive cameras and photographic processing. Consequently many of these Baby Boomers have extensively documented their lives through family photography. The taking of domestic photographs during the past seventy years has resulted in significant

collections of personal images, family photo albums and associated narratives in homes throughout Australia. However, this thesis is not a history of how Baby Boomers use photography or photographic equipment. The outcome from this research emphasises that the narratives prompted by the photograph are important and of value.

Many members of this demographic are nearing retirement from fulltime employment. Now with changing circumstances the Boomers are appreciating that they can use (and some have already started this) their family photographs as the basis for their life stories, underpinning their oral history, and developing a legacy for their children and grandchildren. Whether this is undertaken specifically for family interest, a genealogical record, or an autoethnographical research project, the resulting chronicle will become a substantial social and cultural history of their lives. While this approach to recording a period of time is dissimilar to the more traditional and official histories of this period of Australian history, it is no less legitimate, just different. It remains vitally important.

My central argument is that the family collection of photographs is a significant social and cultural heritage and if neglected then this history is threatened to be lost forever. The literature relating to domestic photography, specifically involving post-Second World War Australian research, has been extensively reviewed by Freund and Thomson (2011) and through this thesis. To date, as pointed out by Freund and Thomson (2011), there are few academics researching this period of Australian family photography and family photographic collections. Furthermore, my research has illustrated that the family photographic collections created by the Australian Baby Boomers are enhanced when tied to oral history, visual anthropology, visual auto/ethnography, or story-telling to provide a lasting legacy. I have also drawn the reader's attention to what could be likened to the 'onioning' of family photography, that of memory, memory-construction and nostalgia.

Story telling

I use photographs to trigger a strong relationship between the narratives of the interviewees, others in my family that I now repeat, or to explain my own stories.

Consequently, an emotive and informative family history is created. Through these stories and the growing family history I am defining my world. Although it is acknowledged that every photograph is 'captured' with the premise of it being viewed at some stage, it is the viewer who makes his or her own determination about the picture. However, the purpose and analysis of the photograph will, and does, change over time. I am now the interpreter of those events and the photographs that have captured that moment in time. Accordingly my memories are stimulated by these images. Details are re-remembered, particulars previously forgotten surface and no doubt other facts will come to light in the future. These are my memories, previously unshared. The tapestry of my life continues to grow through the 'photographic autoethnographic' methodology in this research. It is woven through the linking aspects of the lives of my grandparents, my parents and my extended family and with me through selected images.

I have consistently argued that these photographs stimulate and construct the stories and memories. Accordingly they materialise as the contemporaneous keystone to a family's oral history. Allied to this are the choices that I have to make as to what I impart to my family, descendants, or the wider public. This decision process is an issue that is facing many Baby Boomers who have a collection of family photographs.

The autoethnographic renditions of the research consider the photo collections from a personal perspective. When this 'photographic autoethnography' rationale is adapted by other Baby Boomers it will produce a family photo-legacy. Whilst Baby Boomers can currently generate and share their oral history with their children and grandchildren, this is a time-limited activity. Their family and cultural history will be lost or at least minimalised without these photographs and their supporting narratives being recorded in some manner.

The link between photographs, memory and memory-construction establishes what I have shown as 'photographic autoethnography'. I accept that this is not conventional. Nevertheless, for the recording of the social and cultural fabric of the Baby Boomer cohort, it is a legitimate and valuable approach to an emerging genre. As a young Baby Boomer I grew up in a family where stories

were told and retold. Many of these tales I have remembered, but I cannot escape the influence and impact that photography has had in this memory-making. The photograph often drives the story and arguably the image becomes more valuable because it evolves into more than a reflection of a time, or a scene being depicted.

Research modus

The evolution of methodological styles during the past four decades has added to the rigour and depth of this research project. In its broadest understanding the research methodology for this thesis is qualitative and it progressed further to an ethnographic style of interviews, observations and analysis. However, I discovered that being a member of the demographic group I was researching, contemplation of my experiences in photography were unavoidable. The similarities and contrasts between those of my interview group and my self-knowledge became apparent early in the research process. Cognisant of this development, I introduced autoethnography and a self-interviewing process to detail aspects of my family history. Thus my story emanates from my family photography, which I have defined as 'photographic autoethnography'. This is a method which is more specific in its interpretation and use of photographs than the generalised visual ethnography and autoethnography approaches, which adopt any form of imagery, performance or object to generate a narrative. Other researchers can adopt the photographic autoethnography method as a case study approach to record personal life stories, oral history and aspects of autobiographies.

Whether it is through ethnographic means, oral history, scrutiny of photographs, or the subsequent coding and analyses, due diligence is essential in research. Linked to this rigour is the understanding of truth in the research and formed through the narratives. Truth can have many facets; it is interpretive, subject to recollection and underpinned by cultural understanding. There can be more than one truth, each equally valid and credible. My research, with the supporting stories, provides an opportunity to appreciate what I argue has been

the period of greatest change in the development and use of photography by the consumer – the second half of the twentieth century.

Important aspects of this research project that need to be acknowledged are the influences and subjectivity that I as the researcher introduce. Together with my cultural heritage these have been addressed in the autoethnographic perspectives interwoven throughout this thesis. Subjectivity is unavoidable, so the truth and interpretation of the data are addressed through an open process of selection, questioning, interpreting, coding and analysis of the information. While I cannot separate my personal story from this research, I have used it to corroborate, or contrast with, what others have revealed of their attitudes, experiences and behaviours. The inclusion of a mixture of people outside of the core research participants who were interviewed adds to the authority of the data. This method had a twofold benefit in that the process can be easily replicated, and for those who wish to take the study further the data can be independently interrogated.

The extensive individual interviews, supported by an interconnected autoethnographic reflection are intertwined with an abundance of oral and family histories to produce rich, informative, and fascinating insights to Baby Boomers' lives through their photography. I have shown that the photograph is more than just a catalyst in this process. It is the determining factor to separate those spots of time, the *punctum*, and decisive moments from the mundane and the usual. Initially these interpretations of the images tended to be positive, eliciting good memories and are cocooned in the bitter-sweetness of nostalgia. While family conflict and unhappy times were infrequently captured in photographs, the memories of these events were often stimulated by other images. It was through the ongoing discussions and probing that relevance and the thickness of the narratives were identified. However, it is the 'little differences' when discovered that often lead to a better understanding of the Baby Boomers' photographic collections and their lives. Thus these personal and often revealing records provide some insight into those interesting, strange, and at times unknown particulars that become interesting for current and future researchers.

Scholars in cultural studies, anthropology and sociology tend to use photographs taken by the researcher (sometimes by individuals being researched), or use 'professional' photographs of the group or subculture being researched. This method, or focus on the reading of contemporary photographic texts, aims to aid those researchers in determining their interpretation of the group under study. My thesis is significantly different. I am arguing that the people being researched not only supply the pictures, but they play a fundamental role in the telling of the stories and the oral history of the family, based on those photographs. These photographs depict life-stories and family history, not a cross-section, or a single point of interest, which is often the application of photo-elicitation based research. The extensive collections of family photographs held by Baby Boomers allows the researcher (or the story teller) to delve deeper into the memories, the lives and beliefs of those researched. Through almost seven decades of being photographed, taking and keeping photographs, the lives of the Baby Boomers are explained and the detailed descriptions of their events and memories are analysed. It is through the supporting narrative and elicited descriptions drawn from these photographic prompts, however, that the influence and growing importance of the family photograph is realised.

Throughout its 180-year history, the photograph has been either a rendition of a form of art, or a capturing of an event or activity, and often recorded and received, as a fact or a visual 'truth'. The concept of truth in a photograph is repeatedly accepted as meaning that what is in the photograph is real and, therefore, is factual. However, throughout this thesis, I support the argument that photographs can be interpreted and each viewer of an image can question its 'believability'. At varying times and with a range of people, sundry questions may be asked of the same photograph. Such an understanding subsequently leads to a realisation that while the viewer cares about receiving a factual answer to any questions that may be asked – the questions can be framed in various ways. Thus diverse questions may not produce answers that are either right or wrong just different. This is the case with these family photographic collections; there will be a variety of interpretations and understandings from

them. Similarly future generations will view these collections and legacies with the values and understanding of their era.

There is a strong argument that any text or caption affixed to, or connected with a photograph can add to its authenticity or claims of truth. Often these captions are a reaffirmation of the obvious. Yet dates, names of people, the place of the photograph and a note about the event or celebration can form the basis of validity and be the start of an extended narrative. The advent of digital images/photography has added another dimension to the debate of what has been an accepted formula of photographic truth. Similarly the research shows how social media use has broken down the intimacy of family photographic collections and opened it to public use, interpretation and possible manipulation. The ease with which all images can now be duplicated, manipulated, enhanced, modified, or otherwise altered has confronted a range of social, legal, historic and cultural norms. However, the competent researcher does not automatically accept the image, or what is written in a caption as an undeniable truth. Rather, this information is to be viewed as the starting point to further investigate the contextual understanding, and to satisfy the conditions of authenticity of the photograph.

Old photographs provide a warm, or possibly a painful experience of transporting us to times long past, although others looking at these photographs will see and interpret them differently. Some images will be of passing interest while others will excite and grip the viewer's attention. Whether it is now or in the future, a photograph may be viewed as an historical record of a moment in time, but it is still open to interpretation. It will be the descendants of the Baby Boomers who will analyse and create their own understanding and truth from this legacy. I argue that through the concept of orality, story-telling and the retelling of family stories, these narratives become a part of the fabric of the family history. While the stories may not be completely factual, they are what are believed to be true. Thus the 'photographic autoethnography' from their personal photographic collections forms part of the culture, myths and beliefs of the Australian Baby Boomer generation. This is the growing value of the photographic legacy of Baby Boomers.

Many families also have professionally taken images, wedding albums, and portraits, while some may collect photographs as a hobby, or as an investment. No matter what form the collection takes, it is apparent that the keeper of these family images has significant power, control and influence in recording the family history and postulating a particular truth. Oral history can survive without the photograph, but the photograph without the narrative has its value diminished. Arguably there is always a form of a story accompanying a photograph. It may not be real, the truth, or even based on fact. It may be a story, which is fictionalised as the pages of the photo album are viewed. However, every picture raises that human desire to know what is contained in the frame of the photograph. What is its story? Thus the photograph becomes a memory-maker and adds to the knowledge and memories already held by the viewer. This is a relationship between the photographer, the subject, and the viewer of the photograph. Incumbent in this trilogy is an aspect of voyeurism and has a direct correlation to power, which is linked to the influence of the gaze. The power is generally accepted as residing with the photographer or the user of the photograph. However, I have shown that the subject, the person photographed, can through their presence or gaze, exercise some degree of power or influence on the family as well. This may well affect the narrative accompanying the photograph.

The relationship between the photograph and that of truth, memory, and nostalgia is complex. Which of these features holds the most influence, or which is the most important can be debated. The keystone in understanding family photography is acknowledging that there is fluidity in this relationship. Truth is interpretive, memory is influenced and unreliable, nostalgia is a cultural emotion, and the photograph a reality with its impact governed through time; and the *studium* or *punctum* holds for individual viewers and storytellers. Consequently, there is a personal and cultural protocol to provide acceptable photographs and the associated narratives to be recorded as the family history, either written or as an oral account.

Melding autoethnography, oral history and the photograph

I have demonstrated that ethnographic and autoethnographic research is a legitimate methodology, accepted for more than four decades as a study based, story-telling medium. To enhance this methodology I use family photographic artefacts in support of the personal narrative, oral history and life story of those being researched. While the use of personal photographs in autoethnography has not been extensive, especially in Australia, there are variances in the manner of introducing photographs to the research process. While 'photo-elicitation' and 'photo-feedback' are important methodological approaches, I assert that my inclusion of family photography is different. To reiterate this claim and using what I describe as 'photographic autoethnography', the photographs in this account proceed from adjunct elicitation to being the primary driver of the narrative. Any person (Baby Boomers or others) can use this method as a means of telling their story, supplementing the family history, or developing a written narrative.

To emphasise this concept I have woven into this thesis an autoethnographic and reflective interpretation of my life. What is different in my story is the role that the family photograph played, but to me it was just another part of my life. It is not that I consider everyone has a similar love of photography; I know different. Yet it was not until I dissected what I have done and analysed my photography that I came to understand its importance and value to me. Applying 'photographic autoethnography' to my family collection of pictures, I clearly charted the influences the camera and images have in my life story. Yet these narratives were not just my own. They commenced with my grandparents (even great-grandparents), and have been passed on through the generations. What I have found reassuring however, is that through my research I discovered others with a similar interest. They have not become professional photographers and only one participant has any darkroom experience. Nonetheless, the pride in their photographs, the memories they generated, and the value they placed on these images are strikingly evident.

Throughout this thesis the family photograph is consistently interlaced with the oral histories and stories being told. Similarly I have been constantly reminded

throughout my research how personal stories of others complemented my own encounters. One striking difference in my case has been how photography influenced my life and career decisions. There is a strong relationship between my appreciation of the photograph and family. Similarly the associated aspects of social, career and professional opportunities that have been afforded me reflects that connection. I have experienced the world through my photography. There have been unusual opportunities and memorable occasions, often complementing my strong engagement between life and the photograph. However, my photographs do not hold memories. What they accomplish is to provide a stimulus to recall, to re-remember people, places, and events and reconstruct the stories of those times. I also discovered that some people do not have that benefit of recalling their history through family photographs. While I highlight one example of the impact of fire destroying personal photographs, there are other examples where missing, or no photographs being taken continue to play on individuals' memories and eventual legacy. It is a reminder that family history is significant. This personal history is not less valuable than the official versions and it remains vitally important in recoding the social and cultural fabric of the past seven decades.

Family photographs continue to evolve over time, and are shaped through social and cultural diversity, and family relationships. Not all reflect happy moments or perfect times. While the photograph itself may reveal a little of the detailed background to the scene, it is the memories and stories inextricably linked to the image that give it its strength and influence. I do not consider that there is conflict or incongruity between the theorists who suggest that the family photograph is about the future whilst at the same time, those taking the photographs initially see them as a memory, and a reminder to the past. The family collection is both. As evident from the research, Baby Boomers see their collections as part of their history, and simultaneously acknowledge them as their legacy. Family photographs represent a past, give meaning to the present and offer a future comfort of being remembered. There are examples from the research showing that those who don't have photographs of their early life often feel that something is missing from their history and memory. They are searching to find it.

A consistent theme in this thesis is my argument that with photography there is a relationship between the photographer, the subject and the viewer. This I call the trilogy of the photograph. While both the photographer and the subject are important aspects of the photograph, it is through the viewer that the value of the image is assured. Certainly the aura of the photograph is enhanced when there is a related narrative. A significant demonstration of this is the photograph of the five Royal Navy officers (photo 6). Had Marc come across this photograph without any story to its origins it may have been of passing interest, but it would not have had Barthes' *punctum*. However, with a few words from his mother the image took on an importance that has dogged Marc's life for fifty years.

The literature about photography often mentions power and control when it comes to the keeping, displaying, and the stories around the family photographic collections. Whether it is a single photograph as in Marc's case, or destruction of the images as experienced in other instances discussed in this thesis, these are examples of control and of power. Exercising this power is seen as one person's desire to direct how current family members and future generations should view the family history. While a photograph can be interesting or even capture the viewer's attention, it is the supporting story that establishes the impact. This story grows and changes over time, and between people. It takes on characteristics of further cultural understanding either of time past or through current interpretation.

My investigation shows that even when there have been family tragedies or indignities, the photographs tend to survive. It is the stories surrounding these images that are edited, changed, embellished, or just not told. Yet the photograph, even with the controlled narrative, is still valued. These captured moments in time often have a lasting role in the genealogy of families. Through creating preferred yarns and memories about relatives and friends, or by having mysteries to be solved, the family picture collections grow in importance. The research supports my contention that families place considerable value on the existence and preservation of their photographs. Baby Boomers' photographic repositories continue to give birth to a new compendium of stories, a new complement of memories, and an enduring heritage and promise, for future

generations to enjoy and interpret. This became a significant realisation for me as I analysed the data from the interviews. While no two interviewee's responses were the same, the 'onioning' revealed a repeated allure to their early photographs and memories. Often they reserved their reverence for the transitional images of themselves over the years and this became a further nexus between our lives as Baby Boomers. The growing use of domestic photographs to drive the oral and written history of the family became apparent to me through the interviews with the research participants.

From the interviews I discovered that very few Baby Boomers had photographs of themselves or family members at work. This gave me cause to reflect on my own family and how few photographs there were of my parents, grandparents or siblings at work. Unlike many other Baby Boomers, my working life has been significantly different because of photography. For most of my various careers I could not escape the lens of the camera. Employment based photographs is yet another variance, over time, of how individuals use cameras. The transition from the infrequent number of personally taken images of people at work in the Baby Boomer years (and earlier) to current times has changed dramatically. Small digital cameras and smart phones now provide instant and frequent opportunities for copious numbers of 'pictures at work' to be taken and shared on various social media networks.

A comment on technology

The convergence of technologies, if used effectively will enhance the ease of access and value of the Baby Boomer stories for future generations. The Internet is playing a significant – if still unclear – role in recording the personal lives of ordinary people. With greater frequency there is a muddling of the division between the private and public facets of our lives as proffered via the Internet. Since the rise in popularity of social media in the past decade, the post Baby Boomer generations are embracing this means of engagement. The mastering of rapid technological change for Baby Boomers, I suggest, is one of their bigger challenges. While many of them are computer literate, the ever-growing technology based options appear almost limitless. As an alternative

option Baby Boomers can ignore the fast growing developments in the digital world and continue to jot their stories on the back of photographs, or in short captions in photo albums. My key point is that Baby Boomers have a unique opening to record their important social and cultural experiences as a valued history thus providing their legacy. No previous generation has had the same opportunity. How their legacy is developed and saved is not critical other than ensuring that if technology is used it can be accessed and does not become redundant.

Summation

Arguably the most meaningful moments of significance in my life have been my growing family of three children and five grandchildren. However, through domestic photography I keep returning to the stories of my childhood and my fascination with looking at photographs. This is a recurring theme that every member of my research group similarly echoed. In my life-story the photograph is sometimes the heart of the narrative while in other experiences it is an almost forgotten accessory to the story. However, I maintain that 'photographic autoethnography' continues to preside over the memories and re-remembered events of the past.

Similarly those I interviewed also deliberated on what they now interpret as a nostalgic period of their earlier years. While the interviewees accepted that times have changed and they cannot return to their youthful days their memories remain vivid. In their own manner other Baby Boomers are using 'photographic autoethnography' to tell their story and maintain a connection with their past. The research highlights the sharpness – the prick – of nostalgia, of what once was, is now gone. Throughout our interviews I was continually drawn to their experiences and reminded of my encounters through the camera and the family collection of photographs.

To recount – in this thesis I have presented a clear appreciation and explanation that the:

- academic research into Australian family (domestic) photographic collections since the Second World War is limited
- historical, social and cultural worth of the Baby Boomers' photographs are enhanced through ethnographic and autoethnographic research methodologies
- connotation between the family photograph, oral history, memory-making and life-story is a robust attribute to 'photographic autoethnography', and
- family photographs held by Baby Boomers provide an enduring legacy for future generations to canvass and interpret.

The legacy

Given these four significant points, what my research has exposed is that this thesis is only part of the answer. I have highlighted the promise, the need and the value of employing the Baby Boomers' family photographic collections and the associated narratives as a historical and cultural repository. This, I argue is the first step in realising the emerging value and rich legacy accumulated in family photo albums and shoeboxes in Australian Baby Boomers' homes.

Using photographs and their associated stories, nostalgic memories can tantalise some people to desire an unattainable past. Consideration of the underlying factors around nostalgia makes it apparent that not all pictures resurrect happy memories. The family unit generates intense emotions and strong passions. Often there is a mood of fondness emanating from these family photographic collections, nevertheless certain images provoke conflicting and at times upsetting memories and they cannot be ignored. All of those interviewed experienced confrontation and unhappiness at some time in their lives and they have photographs that trigger this re-remembering.

Conversely, the majority of the interviewees talked of irregular family reminiscences, sitting together, laughing at childhood photographs, and

exploring old photo albums. These impromptu events are also re-remembered, but as a pleasurable past-time. For some it was about the photographs and what they relinquished, for others it was the peripheral stories that emerged. The photographs linked them to their past, often to times and memories not experienced by others. Inherent in the research analysis is that each time a photograph is viewed, even by the same person, often different recollections are evoked, new stories unfold and new memories are created.

In my own case photographs stimulate my memory and provide me with my own moments of a salient past. The long lost, small black-and-white image of my father swallowed amongst the crowd celebrating the success of the first flight from England to Australia has become a memory-maker. Even though it was taken twenty-seven years before I was born. From the old photograph that was buried in the bottom drawer of the sideboard in our dining room at home, I can remember my father in his suit and tie, white shirt, and bowler hat jauntily smiling at the camera, but I cannot show it to anyone – it is lost. I opened this thesis with my granddaughter, Jessica, asking me about 'the olden days'. For Jessica, my eldest grandchild and Rachael, Nathan, Oliver and William, my younger grandchildren, this is now your legacy – as the stories from other Baby Boomers should be for their families, children and grandchildren.

The photographs of events become the ancestral signposts that plot the life stories of families. Again it is evident, from the research, that some pictures may provide tangible evidence of a scandal in the family history, while others open up a treasure chest of forgotten activities and memories. Many of those interviewed agreed that there is an importance in saving the photo-collections and the stories and memories they prompt. No matter their origin, these photographs are the diary of the familial story. Baby Boomers can look to their own collections of family photographs and use them as a storyboard to bequeath their narratives, chronicles, and anecdotes to their children, and those who follow. They provide families with the foundation to re-remember their history and build their legacy.

When British actor Bob Hoskins died (1942 – April 29, 2014), his daughter spoke of eleven 'life lessons' she learnt from her father. One of these was to

take pictures and make memories[103]. As Baby Boomers we take our pictures and are creating our memories. These remembered and collected stories that are passed between generations and family members become part of the fabric of the enduring narrative. This is the endowment of one generation to the next and consideration must be given to the various mediums open for the Baby Boomers to deliver their photographic legacy.

Recent literature suggests that personal legacies are a grasp for immortality, although none in my research group used that term. Whether the individual identifies with this desire for immortality or not, many Baby Boomers [and others] wish to leave a record of their spot in time, and to be remembered warmly. These histories are the reminiscences from the collations of photographs in our homes, where Baby Boomers have dozens of photo albums and shoeboxes holding thousands of personal images.

Others may see this as nostalgic, or a 'trip down memory lane', but for me these events have become key aspects of my life story – my oral history – my family photography. Whether it is my story, or that of any other Baby Boomer, I maintain that these life-stories, oral histories and photographic collections are an important social and cultural history that must be preserved.

103 *Anderson, L 2014, Opinion, as reported in the Adelaide Sunday Mail, May 4, p. 87.*

APPENDIX 1 RESEARCH PARTICIPANT LIST

Interviewee	Gender	Relationship Status	Early or Late Boomer	Profession	Education	Born in	Current Residence
Amber Petty	F	Married	Late	Journalist	University	Adelaide	Adelaide
Andrew	M	Married	Late	Publications	Business	Melbourne	Melbourne
Ann	F	Divorced	Early	Aged Care	Trade	SA country	Adelaide
Bill	M	Married	Early	Media reporter	High School	NSW country	SA country
Bob	M	Same Sex	Early	Sales (ret)	High School	Adelaide	Adelaide
Carol	F	Married	Early	Writer	University	UK	SA country
Cathy	F	Married	Early	Clerical	High School	Adelaide	Adelaide
Chris	M	Married	Late	Public Servant	Trade	WA country	Perth
Darlene Cooper	F	Married	Early	Home Duties	High School	Adelaide	Adelaide
Don	M	Married	Late	Small business owner	High School	Adelaide	Adelaide
George	M	Married	Late	Consultant	University	Adelaide	Adelaide
Helen Blake	F	Married	Late	Retired	High School	SA country	Adelaide
James	M	Married	Early	Aged Care	Business	Adelaide	Adelaide
Janet	F	Married	Late	Landscape Gardener	University	WA country	Perth
Jeremy	M	Married	Early	Consultant	High School	UK	Sydney
John	M	Married	Early	Consultant	Trade	Adelaide	Adelaide
John Adey	M	Single	Early	Tv Producer (ret)	High School	Adelaide	Sydney
Joyce	F	Married	Early	Not for Profit	University	SA country	Melbourne
Julie	F	Divorced	Late	Public Servant	University	Adelaide	Vic country
Jullian Crinder	F	Married	Early	Writer/artist	High School	Adelaide	USA
June	F	Married	Early	Home Duties	High School	Adelaide	Adelaide
Keith	M	Married	Early	Media	University	Adelaide	Adelaide

Interviewee	Gender	Relationship Status	Early or Late Boomer	Profession	Education	Born in	Current Residence
Lional	M	De facto	Late	Consultant	University	Adelaide	SA country
Lois Clarke	M	Married	Pre	Typist (ret)	High School	Adelaide	Canberra
Louise Finnane	F	Widow	Pre	Teacher (ret)	University	USA	Adelaide
Marc	M	Married	Early	Town Planner	University	UK	SA country
Mary	F	Married	Early	Shop Assistant (ret)	High School	Europe	Adelaide
Mavis	F	Married	Early	Shop Assistant	High School	Adelaide	Vic country
Mervin	M	Divorced	Early	Production Line (ret)	High School	SA country	Adelaide
Mickey Hollow	M	Married	Early	Self employed	Trade	Adelaide	SA country
Myrtle	F	Widow	Early	Nurse	Trade	SA country	Adelaide
Paul	M	Married	Early	Production Line	High School	Adelaide	Adelaide
Pauline	F	Married	Early	Nurse (ret)	Trade	SA country	Adelaide
Peter	M	Married	Early	Public Servant (ret)	Trade	Adelaide	Adelaide
Robyn Hukin	F	Married	Late	Teacher	University	Perth	Perth
Ross	M	Married	Early	Public Servant	Trade	UK regional	Adelaide
Ruth	F	Married	Early	Clerical	Trade	SA country	Adelaide
Sarah	F	Separated	Late	Part-time sales	University	Adelaide	SA country
Sharon	F	Single	Post	Sales assistant	University	Adelaide	Adelaide
Shirl	F	Divorced	Early	Self employed	University	Adelaide	Adelaide
Stan	M	Same Sex	Late	Office Clerical	Business	SA country	Adelaide
Sue	F	Married	Early	Nurse (ret)	University	Qld country	Adelaide
Ted	M	Married	Early	Painter (ret)	Trade	SA country	Adelaide
Tony	M	Married	Pre	Accountant	University	Adelaide	Adelaide
Valmai	F	Married	Pre	Home Duties	High School	SA country	Adelaide
Wendy	F	Defacto	Late	Artist	University	Asia	SA country

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