

## Donna Mathewson Mitchell - Absent Memories

### Artist's biography:



I am a Senior Lecturer at Charles Sturt University, with a background in Visual Arts education. My teaching and research is concerned with visual arts education, teaching practice and teaching and learning in public spaces. I have been involved in this project as a lecturer, co-teacher and fellow artist.

### Artist's statement:

The starting point for this series of drawings was the absence of wedding photos in the Chifley Home. This year marks the 100 year anniversary of the marriage of Ben and Elizabeth Chifley in 1914. Inspired by this milestone, I went searching for wedding photos showing the Chifleys on their wedding day. However, I found that there were no wedding photos in the home or in the collection. This is a poignant absence that connects with, and foregrounds other absences in the lives of the Chifleys. This includes physical absences associated with living in different locations, the absence of children and the absence of a shared religious life. I have focused on the concept of a 1914 wedding and have investigated and represented symbols broadly associated with marriage and domesticity and specifically related to the Chifley home. Pencil on paper has provided an easily accessible way to develop compositions inspired by a range of images. The simplicity of the approach resonates with the humble nature of the site and the lives that have inspired it.

