

Amy at Veteran's Flat

A New Understanding of Home

AUTHOR: Bren Donnellan

DATE OF STORY: 21 June 2022

Amy Hill's memory of being photographed is dulled by a haze of teenage angst. During the school holidays she had dyed her ginger hair to purple then back to what felt like a decidedly unnatural, rule-abiding maroon.

During the term Amy's art teacher approached the class to ask if they would be interested in being photographed for an artwork. All she knew was that the work was being made by Anne Ferran at the nearby Maitland Regional Art Gallery. Despite her newfound hair insecurity (and being a person who regularly refused to have their picture taken), she said yes.

Nearly two decades after sitting in front of a camera in an ornate lace headpiece, Amy recounts the sweet reemergence of this picture throughout her life. From the initial showing which brought on that unique embarrassment which can only be felt by a teenager. To messages from friends visiting the gallery years later and still finding it hanging. Or even a student in her undergraduate fine arts class stumbling across the image while researching together. This photo would reliably reappear.

Amy at Veteran's Flat, an artwork in the series Twice Removed by Anne Ferran and Anne Brennan, initially served to draw attention to the lost history of a group of English lacemakers who had worked in France prior to emigrating to Maitland in 1848. In doing so, Ferran inadvertently created a new connection between Amy and her hometown. She notes:

'I think it's one of those things that when I think about it, it makes me quite sad. I think that Maitland and that area does have quite a remarkable history that we never were taught... It's only through weird moments like Anne deciding to do this series that you actually get to learn something quite unique to that area... It might have been one of those first instances where it suddenly dawned on me that there is more to this place that I feel so familiar with.'

Objects in this Story