

Observations of a Rural Nurse

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Sara McIntyre



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To my parents,
Patti and Peter McIntyre









Pages 6–7:

Anzac Day, Miriama
Street, Taumarunui
2015

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Kākahī Town Hall
2017

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Foreword

— Simon McIntyre



One of the marvels of photography is that you can look back at an old photograph and find, there in the detail, something prescient. In the image of my sister Sara and me, taken by our father at Kākahi around 1960, a close look reveals that Sara is holding an old camera. Now, on reflection, it is one of those ‘oh yes’ moments. Fast forward 18 years and I returned from my first spell overseas with a 35mm Pentax for her. This soon led to a bit of DIY processing and printing in the laundry cupboard of our old Wellington home.

Sara’s interest in all things photographic has never waned, and Kākahi in the King Country became her testing ground — family picnics, the river, the locals. Her photographs of this subject matter were always vastly superior to my own so I soon realised I should stick to painting.

Less obvious in those days, but now recognised as a motivating spirit in her work, is the quiet but significant influence of the paintings of our father, Peter. He had devoted a large part of his painting life to depicting the people and landscape of the King Country and of Kākahi in particular. It is not just a shared interest in the subject matter that connects them but also a love of King Country light — golden in the late afternoon of summer, misty, solemn and grey on a cold winter’s day. However, it was Sara’s portraits and scenes of everyday life, as seen on her rounds as a district nurse in the King Country, that resonated so strongly.

The arrival of Instagram allowed Sara to get her remarkable photographs out to a much wider audience. Showing her photographs on this forum had an immediate and life-changing effect, even beyond the large number of people now experiencing her photographs for the first time. Anna Miles took Sara into her gallery stable, exhibitions followed and now the book.

Sara’s story is one that warms the heart: someone who has both passion and talent, largely kept under wraps for most of her lifetime, then brought to life through a series of small but significant events. At this stage it is tempting to say, don’t bother reading about it — just look at the pictures.

Left: Sara and Simon on the front lawn at Te Whare Ra, 1960.









Previous pages:
Kākahi Bakery, 2018

Left:
Waitea Branch Road
Kākahi, 2017



Kākahi Billiards Saloon
2017



Kākahi Town Hall
2014









Kākahī Town Hall spread
2016



Kākahī working bee
2018