

## The Camera

How your camera became your camera is a story. You go on a family holiday in 1982, you love using Mum's camera, the way it feels, the way it shoots, the way objects appear when you look through the view finder. You borrow it. In fact, you borrow it for the next twenty years. You tell your mother that you have done so. Rather you thought you had told her but you hadn't. You show her your photographs from your trip around Australia, she asks what camera you used, you answer – 'My old SLR 35mm that I have had for some years.' You watch surprise drift over her face, 'Your camera! Is that where it has been?' You tell her that you thought she knew you had it, she laughs and says something about a pigs bum. Now you realise that your mother has been searching for her camera every time that she went on a holiday since 1982.

You have not planned to do this book or a photographic exhibition before you leave home. It is not until you receive the first fifteen rolls of film that you have sent back home for processing that you think, 'Gee, some of these are looking great, keep it up, who knows, one day I might make something of it.' You are constantly on the hunt for great shots. You begin to test Caroline's patience.

You check out everything that interests you, ruins, sand, dust, rust, signs, people, water courses, buildings, silos, machinery, fences, the road itself. It is often 40 degrees in the shade. Hundreds of flies miraculously appear the moment you stop. You lose the breeze of the moving vehicle. You drive past something that could be interesting to photograph then you think about how it could be interpreted, this way or that, you consider the light. You are still considering, still driving. Your mental picture goes on for a few minutes, you finally decide it is worth pulling over for further investigation.

You have driven 5kms past the subject. You swing into a sweeping U-turn, Caroline gives you a look of controlled patience as she reaches for a book. You are always curious, your camera goes with you everywhere. You are self-taught. You don't own a tripod. You hope that your photographs will inspire Australians to travel to the remote areas of their country, to have a better understanding of this place, this country.