

Photobook Memoirs

Extended

The Life Story – A Guide to the Process

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in creating an Extended Photobook Memoir. This guide explains how the process works, from selecting photographs and recording your stories through to the photography, design and delivery of your finished books.

The Extended Memoir brings together a contemporary photographic portrait with photographs from your own collection and stories from different periods of your life. Through conversation, photography, archival images and careful editing, I create a book that moves between past and present.

Every memoir develops differently. Some are more photographic, while others contain more written stories and reflections. The Extended Memoir provides a framework for the project, while allowing the final book to develop naturally from your photographs, memories and stories.

What's Included

- Two 2-hour interviews to gather stories, memories and context
- One 1-hour documentary-style photo shoot in your home environment
- One 2-hour photo selection and consultation session
- Digital scanning and preparation of selected archival photographs
- Extended selection and editing of quotes and anecdotes
- Thoughtful visual sequencing and book design
- Professional proofreading before printing
- Up to 60 pages (30 double-page spreads)
- Two premium lay-flat hardback books

An Extended Memoir will typically include around 40–70 photographs in total, combining contemporary photographs with selected archival photographs. The exact number will vary depending on the balance between photographs and written material and the way your story develops. This is a guide rather than a fixed number.

Investment: NZD from \$3,800

The \$3,800 starting price reflects the typical scope outlined above. If your photographic collection, existing written material or the story we uncover requires substantially more work or a larger book, I'll discuss the options and any additional cost with you before proceeding. You can always choose to keep the memoir within the original agreed scope.

The Process, Step by Step

Step 1: Photo Selection & Consultation Session (2 hours)

We begin by looking through photographs from your own collection – albums, boxes of prints and loose photographs – and talking about the people, places and periods they represent. Together we'll identify the images that will help give the book its shape and connect your present-day portrait with earlier parts of your life.

- Please gather a broad selection beforehand rather than trying to make all the decisions yourself.
- Names, dates and locations are useful if you know them, but they don't need to be complete.
- We'll begin narrowing the collection down together, looking for the photographs that best help tell your story. An Extended Memoir will typically contain around 40–70 photographs overall, including both contemporary and archival images, although the final number will depend on the material and the balance of words and images.

Step 2: The Interviews (two 2-hour sessions)

With the photographs as a starting point, we sit down for two relaxed recorded interviews. The extra interview time allows us to explore different periods of your life in more depth and follow the stories that emerge.

- I'll guide the conversation with prompts, but there is no fixed script.
- The interviews are recorded so you can speak freely without worrying about note-taking.
- Quotes, anecdotes and stories are transcribed and carefully edited while retaining your voice.

Step 3: Photo Shoot (1 hour)

A documentary-style photo shoot takes place in your home and everyday surroundings. These contemporary photographs form the present-day thread of the book.

- There's no need to style your home or prepare formal poses.
- We'll work with natural light and the places that feel most like you.
- The aim is a relaxed portrait of who you are now.

Step 4: Scanning & Digitisation

Your selected archival photographs are digitally scanned at high resolution. Basic clean-up and tonal or colour correction is applied where needed, while retaining the character of the original photograph.

- I take a light touch with restoration – scratches, creases and fading can be part of an old photograph's character.
- Original photographs are handled with care and returned once scanning is complete.
- Because every collection is different, the amount of scanning and preparation required will vary. If your collection requires unusually extensive scanning, specialist restoration or other work beyond the agreed scope, I'll discuss this with you before undertaking the additional work.

Step 5: Writing & Narrative Development

Working from the interviews and our conversations around your photographs, I select and edit the quotes, anecdotes and stories that give a sense of the different periods of your life.

Existing written material

Relevant existing writing can be incorporated into your memoir. If you have a substantial amount of written material that requires extensive editing or restructuring, I'll discuss this with you separately once I've had an opportunity to review it.

If extensive existing writing becomes an important part of the finished memoir, I'll let you know whether this can be accommodated within the original scope or whether additional editorial work would be required.

Step 6: Layout & Design

Your finished book will contain up to 60 pages (30 double-page spreads), bringing contemporary photography, archival photographs and text together. The sequencing may follow the broad chronology of your life or take a more thematic approach, depending on what best suits your material.

Some spreads may be quiet and spacious, while others bring several photographs or longer passages of text together. The aim is to create a book with a natural rhythm rather than a fixed template.

The exact balance of photographs and words emerges during the design process. Some stories need a single photograph across a spread; others work beautifully with several images. This is why the number of photographs can vary from one memoir to another.

Step 7: Review & Refinement

Once the interviews have been transcribed and the quotes, anecdotes and stories selected, I'll send the text through to you to review. This is your opportunity to check names, dates and details for accuracy. I handle the photographic selection, sequencing and layout independently.

If, during the development of the memoir, we uncover more material than can comfortably fit within the agreed 60 pages, I'll discuss this with you. We can either refine the material to fit the original scope and price, or you can choose to expand the book for an agreed additional cost.

Step 8: Printing & Delivery

Your finished memoir is professionally printed and bound as a premium lay-flat hardback, allowing photographs and spreads to sit flat and uninterrupted across the page. The Extended Memoir includes two copies. Once printed, I bring your finished books to you in person so we can look through them together for the first time.

Additional copies can be ordered at the current printing and binding cost. I'll provide an exact price before ordering.

A Note on Project Scope

Your Extended Memoir begins with an agreed scope and starting price. Because the story develops through our conversations and through exploring your photographs, it isn't always possible to know at the outset exactly how many photographs, anecdotes or pages will ultimately work best.

If the material fits comfortably within the agreed Extended Memoir, the original price remains unchanged. If we discover that you have enough material for a substantially larger book, additional interviews, extensive existing writing or specialist photographic work, I'll discuss the possibilities and costs with you first. No additional work or cost will be added without your agreement.

A Note on Timing

Because each book involves careful editing, image selection and considered design, the process unfolds over several weeks. I'll keep you updated at each stage so you always know where things stand.

Getting in Touch

If any questions come up at any point – before we begin, or partway through – please don't hesitate to contact me. This is your story, and I want you to feel comfortable and informed throughout the whole process.

I'm looking forward to working with you.

Best wishes,

Karen

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