Overall Comments:
Wonderful, just wonderful; you have produced a very good response for Assignment 02, 'The Archive'; the consideration and experimentation with the layout is engaging and visually strong. Before I read your commentary, I clicked the Blurb link where your online book was a joy to examine. Viewing it full screen on a 27” display, certainly gave the images presence. It was intriguing to guess the family relationships; just the knowledge of it being a family album takes away ambiguity and subconsciously plants familial connections.

There is a real sense of photographic history with this archive; from the creased photograph of your husband when he was a schoolboy, to the strip of negatives and the handwritten comments on the back of some photographs, the textual qualities are rich and full of narrative. Your contextual investigations are of equal merit; the material you have explored is very good and fully evidences your criticality with this subject, well done.

Assignment 2 Assessment potential
I understand your aim is to go for the Photography Degree and that you plan to submit your work for assessment at the end of this course. From the work you have shown in this assignment, providing you commit yourself to the course, I suggest that you are likely to be successful in the assessment.

As with assignment one, the above passage is required by OCA as an indicator of your progress and potential for ‘Formal Summative Assessment’. Based upon this submission and your level of engagement I foresee a successful assessment.

Feedback:
Demonstration of Technical and Visual Skills
The form and structure of your book is very good, the layout evidences a strong visual awareness and a considered design approach, which strengthens the flow and reading of your family album. The viewer will notice the connections and pick out facial similarities; the clues are there to transform the viewer into a visual genealogist. For myself, it was the jawline and emerging cheeky grin that both your husband and son exhibit in their schoolboy pictures.

There are a few technical suggestions to consider with the layout; firstly, when you place an image in the centre of page it can give an allusion that it is falling downwards. With all of the images that have an equal white space above and below, look into shifting the image up by a few millimetres.
The page opposite the single image ‘Bad Hair Day’ appears slightly cluttered; possibly create one more page to accommodate the other images. The annotation on the back of that photograph is wonderful, coupled with the colours and clues contained, which aid the viewer in dating the image.

I recommend experimenting with a rostrum camera or similar device in copying your photographic images. The use a flatbed scanner instantly flattens and strips away all depth from the photographs and their various cardboard encasings. The slightest shadow on the edge of an image can give it physical presence; we would then read them as being objects, something tangible that has been handled during this archival process. As opposed to a full-size rostrum rig, have a look at the following video for an idea of a possible set-up:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vSwM0mrhUR0

Quality of Outcome
This assignment has been presented to a high standard; the approach and attention to detail in its formation is very good, which evidences a strong practice. You have communicated very well; your thoughts and ideas on the archive, where you have made some very good lines of enquiry that have much potential for further study.

The Polaroid of you, aged 26, is immensely powerful and connective. Look beyond the image of you; examine the Polaroid as an historical artefact, this picture is more than a simple visual trigger; it is a direct physical connection to the past. Its not just about the instantaneous act of being able to see the image, like with digital cameras today, its the possible physicality of touching and holding this mnemonic object the moment it was created in that time of sadness is what is engaging and worth researching further.

The themes are different but have a read of this text that explores the role of Polaroid pictures and the snapshot:

Demonstration of Creativity
There is clearly a high level of imagination, experimentation, invention and the development of a personal voice within this assignment. Your early layout experiments are good to observe, they demonstrate your development and refinement, where you have made some ideal editorial considerations. As an informal portrait, the image of your husband and son together is great.

Your experimentations into layering text over the images are very successful; perhaps this could be taken further for another project. To continue your development, there are two more technical experiments that I recommend to try. The first, which may add to your book, is to invert the strip of four colour negatives, if you do this you may have to re-scan them with a light-source behind, such as a light-box or a tablet emitting a pure white, bright screen.

The last suggestion is to balance out the monochromatic tones of the two images ‘18 and 80’.
Context
You have drawn upon some of the classics for your research; Sontag, Barthes and Langford have provided you with some ideal material to base your study on. The role of the compiler has not changed much; they have just become less passionate and more clinical in their approach to rewriting family history. As opposed to brutally beheading friends and family, who have fallen from grace; the ‘digital compiler’ can carefully remove these black sheep through Photoshopped, thus preserving a whole image that may hold no evidence of its deception, where its analogue counterpart may.

This act of physically cutting photographs has always upset me; this is because my own family album contains headless images of a man referred to as my father. I only possess one image of him and that is all I have to base a visual connection to.

You have explored and considered the role of the physical photograph very well; if you have more Polaroid’s, they may form the basis for an investigation into photographic physicality and the importance of the instant artefact.

Learning Logs or Blogs:
You have made some very good entries in your learning log/blog that have the potential for growth, both as photographic projects and possible essays. What excited me were the mini-lab, ‘quality control’ stickers; I do remember them well, as it was part of my job to apply them, when I worked as a weekend mini-lab printer for Jessops whilst I was an undergraduate student. What is fascinating, is that film scanning technology has improved dramatically over the last decade; so those images that appeared unprintable, could be resurrected, which could bring about new archives and visual triggers of moments that only surfaced in our dreams.

Suggested reading/viewing:
The notion of rewriting history in the analogue family album is part of our culture, selective edits and folded over images are commonplace in forming new stories. But in the digital age, what about fabricating banal looking snapshots with celebrities added, which present new and alternative fictions? That is what this artist has done:
http://twistedsifter.com/2012/03/photoshopping-celebrities-into-holiday-party/

Pointers for the next assignment:
The next chapter and subsequent assignment is about forming your criticality and theoretical pathway, in which the end result is an approximate 2,500-word essay. The guiding questions are quite good and offer room for interpretation. The ‘digital self’ has much scope for exploration, which could encompass the family album, or touch upon the selfie craze and its dissemination into social media platforms, such as Instagram.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment assessed by</th>
<th>Russell Squires</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment assessed on</td>
<td>18/02/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next assignment approximately due</td>
<td>18/04/2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>