



## ARTS & CULTURE

Coledale author shares 'All That I Forgot'  
*The Illawarra Flame*

Oct 29 2022



*Author Anne Howell will be speaking at the I Am Not Making This Up festival. Photo supplied*

*By Anne Howell, author of *All That I Forgot: a Memoir**

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Have you ever wondered if anyone really has the ‘who am I, where am I?’ amnesia you find in popular fiction? I explore my first-hand experience of retrograde amnesia in my memoir, *All That I Forgot*.

My encounter with amnesia began after complications from neurosurgery threw me into a three-day coma in 1991. I had been diagnosed with a defect on my outer brain, and surgery seemed my only hope. The surgery worked, but in the process I caught the deadly bug, meningitis.

I woke thinking the hospital room I lay in might be a spaceship. This had a certain logic as I felt I was about nine years old. Yet I turned out to be 31 and mother of a young child I didn’t recognise on first sight. Once taken home by a man I didn’t remember to raise our daughter – wishing there was a motherhood manual to help, not that that would assist as I couldn’t read – I began to investigate my missing past. Many walls blocked my way, often thrown up by those closest to me, my mother in particular. People were clearly withholding salient facts, but why?

I wrote *All That I Forgot* to invite readers to join me to revisit this peculiar experience, which people say reads as ‘stranger than fiction’.

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Join Anne at the [I Am Not Making This Up](#) festival of true storytelling at Coledale Community Hall on Sunday, November 27.

Anne will be speaking about her experience with severe amnesia at an 11.30am-12.30pm session titled *Mind & Body* with Sydney author Phillipa McGuinness, who goes beneath the surface to examine our largest organ in *Skin Deep*

Read more about the festival presenters [here](#), including award-winning author of *The Winter Road* [Kate Holden](#), and book tickets [here](#)

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*'Stranger than fiction, [this] extraordinary amnesiac memoir will have you wondering if it's better to remember or forget.'*  
Tom Flood, Oceana Fine

# ALL THAT I FORGOT

A MEMOIR

ANNE HOWELL