



Albert Cook

Interview Excerpt 1 November 2015

Oral History Project

Reliving the past: Stories from our communities

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Interviewee: Albert Cook
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Transcript: Sally Forsstrom



Albert Cook
The 1955 Flood

In this interview Albert Cook talks about his experiences of the 1955 flood. At the time of the flood he was a young man living at the family home located on the corner of Cobra and Macquarie Street and working as a motor mechanic at Budden Bros. Garage in Macquarie Street.

This recording created on the 1st November 2015 is part of Macquarie Regional Library's oral history project: 'Reliving the past: stories from our communities.' Each recording contributes to the developing story of life in the Dubbo area.

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[0:03:08] (I): When were you first aware of a problem with the river?

(S): Well, about 5 o'clock in the morning, Mum woke me up and said, "Albert, the water's coming in Cobra Street." Now, I've never doubted my mother in my life, but I thought, well this was going to be the first time, so I had to get up and have a look and sure enough the water was coming up Cobra Street.

[0:03:35] (I): What happened then?

(S): Well, it kept rising, and friends of ours that lived in Macquarie Street, sort of around the corner, but the backyards backed on, their house was a bit lower. I and a chap that was going with the girl there, pulled up their carpet. Then it was still rising, and I estimate that it was rising about a foot an hour, the rate it was coming. So we went in and we pulled up the carpet in Mum and Dad's house.

[0:04:10] (I): Did you take any other precautions?

(S): We put the furniture on bricks. We thought, "Well, it's not going to rise that high." Bricks not that high, but that's all we did. But the carpet we put up on top of the furniture.

[0:04:25] (I): How did you feel when you were rushing around doing this?

(S): How did I feel? Well, (sighs) I don't know. I guess we just felt as though well, the water's going to come in, we've got to save the furniture from getting ruined, and if we lift it up on bricks, that's about six inches, that'd be plenty. But of course it wasn't, it wasn't enough.

[0:04:54] (I): So how high did the water come up?

(S): It came about two foot in our house, and as I said earlier, the house was about two foot off the ground therefore we had four foot of water in the house yard.

[0:05:07] (I): After you got water into the house, when did you decide to leave your house?

(S): Well, once it was coming in, we knew that we couldn't stop there, obviously, so we took the cars - possibly taken them out a bit before that - and then Dad drove up to one of my sisters that lived in Darling Street, out of flood area. Well, then when the water was getting up higher, my mother which was only five foot tall - my brother-in-law, Kevin, was there, he was six foot and a bit - so he piggy-backed Mum over the gutter and out and up to dry land.

[0:05:56] (I): Goodness it must have been a bit of a trial for your mother. Was she nervous, upset?

(S): I don't know, I don't think she was nervous. I always wished I'd had a camera at the time, but she wasn't going to re-enact it (laughs).

Excerpt Ends