



Nora Clarke

Interview Transcript 9 June 2017

Oral History Project

Reliving the past: Stories from our communities

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Interviewee: Nora Clarke
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Date: 9 June 2017
Transcription: Helen Thompson



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Dubbo in the 1950s

In this interview Mrs Nora Clarke talks about her experiences of the 1955 flood. At the time of the flood she was a young married woman living at her family home located on Serisier Street in Dubbo, raising four young children. Mrs Clarke also talks about her memories of seeing Queen Elizabeth II when she visited Dubbo in February 1954.

This recording created on 9th June 2017 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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[0.00:26] Interviewer (I): Thanks very much for your time today, Mrs Clarke. For the benefit of the recording, could you please state your full name, and what year you were born in?

Subject (S): My name is Nora Mary Clarke. I was born in Portland in 1929, the 12th January. And I grew up in Portland until I was 18, 17 or 18, and I went to Lithgow to work at the hospital, training to be a nurse. And it did that for three years, and then I met my husband [Ronald Clarke]. He used to come and see his mum who was in the hospital.

(I): Oh, yes.

(S): (Laughs). And that's how we got to know one another. In Lithgow at that time, there was a big hall down near the showground, and they used to hold dances on Saturday night. And that was the place to go, and particularly for the nurses, they all, we all went to the "Rec", it was called then, Recreation Hall, but it was called the "Rec". And that's where we, you know, met people, and that's how I got to know my husband. 'Cause he was a wonderful dancer. He had three sisters, and they made sure that he could dance, 'cause they used to take him to dance with when they went to the dances (laughs), when he was a young lad. So he was always a good dancer. Which is quite a thing, because a lot of men can't dance. Particularly at that time, they couldn't. And 'cause this is at the end of the war years.

(I): Yes.

(S): 'Cause I grew up during the war years, I was at school then. All the time I was at school, the war was on, and I can remember, I started work before the war ended, and then I can remember coming to work on the day that - - -. In Portland, there was a cement works and a small arms factory. There was coal mines, you

know, a lot of industrial areas, and I can remember they blew every whistle (laughs) that was in those contraptions to say that the war was over. And, as I was walking to work I had two or three girls - we all worked, walked together, and we said "Will we go, or will we stop?" (laughs). And I think we got half way to work, and then the whistles went, so we all stopped, and went back home again. But it was an interesting time, I can tell you. But, from when I started working, I worked there, and then I went nursing at Lithgow, and met Ron.¹ And then we were married, and I had babies! Quite quickly. I had four babies, no three, in Lithgow, and they were born fairly quickly, and then he got a move on the Railway, 'cause that's where he was working, and we came up here. And I've been here ever since.

(I): To Dubbo.

(S): Best thing. 4 I can remember getting off at the station at Lithgow, cause we did all our travel by train, and, the - - -. I can remember getting off at the station, and thinking, I've come home now. I felt very comfortable, you know, with moving. But then again, my grandparents took up land here in 1905 or 8, I can't remember which, but it's either 5 or 8, and, it's out at Mogriguy.

(I): OK

(S): At a place called "Marshdale", and there's a home, and I don't know whether it's still, you know, productive or whatever, because during the war there were two brothers, one went to the war, one stopped to look after the farm.² And he married, and they lived on the farm, and Granny moved into town with one of my aunts.

[0:05:11] (I): What were your grandparents' names?

(S): Mmm?

(I): What were your grandparents' names. That used to live out - - - ?

¹ Mrs Clarke first worked at a shoe-shop in Portland per her daughter Lyn.

² "Marshdale", Mogriguy. 'Location: 3 miles North from Mogriguy, 5 miles from Eumungerie', Dubbo Liberal and Macquarie Advocate, 24 January 1846, p. 6.

(S): Cole. Harry, and oh, what was Granny's name?³ Isn't that awful, I can't remember.

(I): That's alright, we can find out later.

(S): Anyway. I can always remember that she was quite a big woman, and when she laughed, her tongue used to come out (laughs). 'Cause I was only a child, and that was what intrigued me. But, she was a lovely old lady, and she used to come and visit us at my mother's place at Portland, and was quite a Mum used to love to have her, mum naturally come to see her. So she was here when I came to Dubbo. Or was she, I can't remember whether she had passed away by then.⁴ Anyway, my husband and I, we lived with an aunt for a week or two, until we found that old house.

[0:06:13] (I): What was your aunt's name? [This question was not answered]

(S): The house, I don't know whether I told you in the first place, but, I have forgotten the name of the people that owned it.⁵ They had a baker's shop, they used to make bread, delivered it around town. And they had a shop opposite the - - -, where, it was De La Salle then. What's there now?

(I): I think it's the TAFE now.

(S): Yes, that it. Yes, the TAFE.⁶ Well, they were opposite that. There was a shop down on the corner. I don't know what - probably been built into a house now. But anyway, that's where they were, and anyway they owned this old house, and the man that owned it wanted to get rid of it, because they were moving to Sydney. Or moving, anyway. And they let us - we had a small deposit, he let us put that down, and we paid it off as rent.

[0:07:19] (I): Was it £300 you had as a deposit, you told me before?

³ Henry Cole (1869-1933) and Mary Charlotte Cole (nee Gardiner) (1868-1951).

⁴ 'Mrs Mary Charlotte Cole (82) of Nancarrow Street', died 25 September 1951. 'Obituary', *Dubbo Liberal ad Macquarie Advocate*, 26 September 1951, p 4.

⁵ The house was owned by Mr Pulbrook per her daughter Lyn. Harold John Edward Pulbrook, baker, lived at 2 Short Street, Dubbo, in the 1949 Australian Electoral Rolls.

⁶ TAFE Western, Fitzroy Street Campus, Dubbo.

(S): Yes.

(I): That's at 1 Serisier Street in Dubbo, isn't it? The house that you bought.

(S): Yes. You know, can you imagine anybody doing that now?

(I): No. (both laugh)

(S): I can't.

(I): So you didn't have to get a mortgage or anything to pay your house off. So, that's very lucky.

(S): We had no mortgage, thank goodness! But it took us a few years to pay it off, even so. But, I don't know what exactly, I don't remember whether it - I think it might have been £6,000, at the time, which is a cheap house, when you think about it. But at that time it was, that was - did I tell you that at the first place?

[0:08:10] (I): No, you hadn't mentioned how much the house was. So, that's good.

(S): I can't remember, I really - if I ever, ever knew, we just paid it off! And just thankful to have somewhere that we could - knew where we were up to with accommodation.

[0:08:30] (I): So what were the names of your children?

(S): My children? Evelyn Grace, which she hated. She hated Evelyn! (laughs). And it's a very fashionable name now, but at that time, no, but she has always been known as Lyn.

(I): OK.

(S): Lyn, she's Lyn Everett. And then I had one son, Ronald John - Ronald Ernest, and then, I had a daughter, Janice Elizabeth. And then another daughter, Patricia Christine. And then Wendy was eight years after Trish. We lost Jan in a car accident when she was 21, or 22, she was finished, just finished - college at school.

(I): That's sad.

(S): Learning to be a teacher. And she was at a place called Oaklands, in the Riverina.

[0:09:28] (I): So were your first three children born in Lithgow?

(S): Yes.

[0:09:34] (I): Was Trish born there as well? Or was she born - - -?

(S): Yes, she was born in Dubbo.

[0:09:36] (I): She was born in Dubbo, was she? So after you moved to Dubbo. So when did you move to Dubbo?

(S): Mmm?

[0:09:41] (I): What year did you move to Dubbo?

(S): '52. 1952.

[0:9:43] (I): On the train. When you moved to Dubbo on the train, did you have much stuff to bring with you?

(S): Not a lot. Mainly clothing. We have very little furniture or anything like that. And whatever we had, we collected once we got here. And, I can't remember, if we did ever - we might have had a certain amount of bits and pieces that we had, you know, brought up, but I can't, honestly can't remember. We did have, I remember, a (cough) cupboard for a kitchen cupboard, and I had it for years afterwards, and I painted it in different colours, and all the rest of it, and I think we had a table and chairs.

(I): Yes.

(S): And that was about it. But I don't know whether we had beds. I can't honestly remember, but we must have had something, because we, we survived. We had three bedrooms in that house, so the four girls, no, there were only two girls when we first started, two girls in one room, two girls in the other, and there was a verandah at the back, and that's where my son slept. And then over the years we renovated and made it decent, and when we finished with the house, it was quite respectable, but it was it was always, an old, you know, weatherboard house.

[0:11:28] (I): Did it have a colourbond roof?

(S): No.

[0:11:31] (I): No, not a colourbond, a corrugated iron? (both laugh)

(S): Corrugated iron. Corrugated iron, yes. Basic.

[0:11:37] (I): And a verandah out the front?

(S): Eh?

(I): And a verandah out the front?

(S): Yes.



1 Serisier Street, Dubbo, ca. 1960s.

[0:11:41] (I): So that was a photo of it, wasn't it, at 1 Serisier Street?

(S): Yes. When we came back after the flood, the verandah, was an old wooden one, it was up here! (Mrs Clarke indicates several feet off the floor)

(I): So, it had been pushed up.

(S): (Coughs). It was pulled down, and we got us a very smart cement one (coughs). Improved things no end.

0:12:07] (I): So I suppose we had better talk about the flood, bettern't we? Let's find my questions.

(S): We are not doing much about the flood. (both laugh)

[0:12:14] (I): So, before we get to the flood, actually, so what other shops did you shop at in Dubbo around Serisier Street? When you first came to Dubbo, and were living at 1 Serisier Street? What were some of the shops that you went to? Like, you mentioned the bakeries, so that was at - - .

(S): We never used that bakery, I've forgotten, Porter, I think their name was, or some such. But I don't think that's the right name. But, because they pulled down - because they were selling the house to us, they were moving out then. But, I've forgotten what the bakers were there.

[0:12:51] (I): Was it one in Macquarie Street? Was it one in Macquarie Street that you went to?

(S): Probably. Yes. Western Stores was the main store then.⁷ And I'll tell you another one, that was George W. Taylor, was is George?⁸

(I): Yes?

(S): Taylor, in Macquarie Street. Not that we went there very often.

[0:13:15] (I): Where did you get your vegetables and fruit from?

(S): Well, Ying Sing's were around the corner from us.⁹ Mrs Ying Sing, she had bread, fruit and vegetables. We used to get them from her. There was another one, Duncan, Sinclair Duncan.¹⁰ He had the best fruit and veg. And he was in the middle of Macquarie Street. And I used to go there if I could, because he had the best fruit and vegetables. Comfort Shoes store, I always went there for shoes if I needed them for the children and myself.¹¹ And, as I say, the sales were the things we waited for, because you got some nice shoes at a reasonable cost.

(I): Yes.

⁷ Western Stores, Macquarie Street, Dubbo.

⁸ Harold W. Taylor Ford Sales & Service, Macquarie Street, Dubbo.

⁹ Ying Sing general store, on the north eastern corner of Macquarie and Bultje Streets, Dubbo.

¹⁰ 'Western Fruit Supply, Sinclair Duncan, Prop.' Advertisement in the Dubbo Liberal and Macquarie Advocate, 24 December 1953, p. 4. Located at 136 Macquarie Street. Advertisement in the Dubbo Liberal and Macquarie Advocate, 3 July 1952, p. 5.

¹¹ 'The Comfort Shoe Store, 101-103 Talbragar Street, Dubbo'. Advertisement in the Dubbo Liberal and Macquarie Advocate, 11 July 1952, p. 4.

(S): I went to the paper, there was a paper shop that I always went to. I think - I've forgotten their name, but he was there for a long time, and it was in Macquarie Street, no - in Talbragar Street.

[0:14:38] (I): Was it Snares?¹²

(S): Because Ron used to call in as he came from work and pick up the paper, and I used to get a couple of magazines, and he would bring them home to me, too.

[0:14:51] (I): So your husband worked at Dubbo Railway Station, then, didn't he?

(S): Yes, he worked - he didn't work at the Station. He worked at what they called the Loco Department.¹³ And he rostered the men that worked on the engines, and the guards that worked the trains. And that was his job.

(S): In 1955 when the floods came - - -. No, first of all, he had, when the Queen came, when the Queen came before that, and he had to roster trains in and out of Dubbo, and he was only here, you know, a short period of time, so it was a big learning curve for him. Because they were coming from all over the place.

(I): So a pretty big job.

(S): So he got through that all right, and the next thing you know, we had the flood. And of course that caused, that caused mayhem, really, in, you know, those sort of things. Because a lot of the lines were blocked, you know, they couldn't move anywhere. And oh it was, it was an interesting time! I can tell you. But they managed, they got through it all. And started again.

(I): He must have done really well. (sound of rustling paper)

(S): Did I talk all that much?

[0:16:17] (I): Yes (laughs). So, talking about when Queen Elizabeth visited Dubbo on 10th February 1954, did you see the Queen when she came to Dubbo?

(S): Yeah. I sure did!

¹² A. E. Davies' Newsagency in Talbragar Street. The Talbragar Street Newsagency was not purchased by Joe Snare until some years later.

¹³ Referred to in the Dubbo Liberal and Macquarie Advocate as the 'Loco Department of the Dubbo Railway', 31 July 1952, p. 4.

[0:16:28] (I): Whereabouts were you, when you seen her?

(S): I was, it was what they called the White Bridge, that came in over the Macquarie, and it came up by - at that time, what was an old men's home, on that side of the, oh - remind me what that was of?¹⁴

[0:16:51] (I): The Bushman's Home, or something like that?

(S): Yes, that was the Bushman's Home, but there was an office - - -.

[0:16:57] (I): The Talbragar Shire building? Was it?

(S): The which?

[0:17:00] (I): The Talbragar Shire building?¹⁵

(S): Yes, that's it. Well, I stopped on that corner.

(I): Uh hm.

(S): And I was as, far as from here to, who - - -? (indicates Simone Taylor, Local Studies Officer, seated several feet away monitoring the recording equipment)

(I): Simone?

(S): To the Queen, and I have never forgotten her lovely, clear white skin. Beautiful skin. She couldn't have gone out in our sun! (laughs). She'd have frizzled! (both laugh)

[0:17:26] (I): Could you see her when she came across the White Bridge?

(S): No. No. 'Cause I was, 'cause there was quite a dip in the road, there, and I was on the corner, and you couldn't see. (background noise - someone speaking in the hall outside)

She was in an open car, you know, open top car, but until she got up near me, I couldn't see her at all. And she went around, they went around to the park, but I didn't go to that, because, by that time, there were so many people, it was impossible. So, that was my view of the Queen. And they never, they never stop

¹⁴ The premises formerly known as the Bushman's Home was located on the south west corner of Macquarie and Bultje Streets, Dubbo.

¹⁵ The Talbragar Shire building was located on the north-west corner of Macquarie and Bultje Streets, Dubbo.

around very long, they're always caught up with, you know, all the protocol that they go on with. But I did see her, and I can always remember her, as I say, her beautiful clear, lovely skin. She's a remarkable woman, the Queen, isn't she?

(I): Yes.

(S): Because she's well in her nineties now, and - - -.

(I): And she's still working. (laughs)

(S): Yes. A miracle that she is able to keep going as well as she does. And I thought it was wonderful that she went to see people in that Manchester, Manchester Hospital, I think it was. She went to see the people there.¹⁶ And I thought what - what a wonderful thing to do, for a lady of her age, to make the effort to go. And I mean to go from where - London to Manchester, I don't know how far it is, but, it is still a journey for her to take.

(I): Yes.

(S): But, I thought, well, she's got her heart in the right place.

[0:19:16] (I): Did you see her when she came in 1992, was it? As well, when she came to Dubbo?

(S): Where was she then?

(I): She came into Dubbo then, as well, I think.

(S): I possibly did. I can't remember.

(I): Yes.

(S): I wonder where she was?

[0:19:32] (I): I don't know, because my mother seen her when she sort of flew into Dubbo Airport. But she must have gone to a few places in Dubbo.

(S): Yes. I probably did. I can't, I honestly can't remember that one. But I do remember that first one.

¹⁶ 'Britain's Queen Elizabeth II visited Manchester children's hospital ... following the suicide bomb attack at a concert in the city, May 26, 2017'. ABC News, 'Queen visits Manchester injured in hospital', <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-05-26/queen-visits-manchester-injured-in-hospital/8560852>, accessed 26 June 2017.

[0:19:49 (I): So were the people cheering and waving flags?

(S): Oh, yes. Very much so. Yes.

[0:19:56] (I): Did you have a flag?

(S): I don't think so. (both laugh)

[0:20:03] (I): So I suppose we should talk about the 1955 flood now. Do you remember if there had been a lot of rain in Dubbo in the days leading up to the flood?

(S): Oh, it rained and rained for days! First off, I never ever thought that the flood would, like, there would be - the river would come up as high as it did. And I can remember going down to see the, how far it had come up, before we went to bed that night. And it had come up half way up the thingummy, the back of the, oh, that place - - -.

(I): The Talbragar Shire building?

(S): The Talbragar Shire building.

[0:20:50] (I): So, on Bultje Street, sort of?

(S): No, up in Macquarie Street.

(I): Uh hm.

(S): And, oh, we went to bed quite comfortably. Thought, you know, it wouldn't go any further than that. Oh, no, not much. Anyway, the old chap that lived next door to us, 4 o'clock in the morning, he comes banging on the door, and saying, "..... coming round the corner!" "Coming round the corner!"¹⁷ And the water, was coming, because there was an old galvanised iron fence, in front of a like, it's a - on the other side of us, and round the corner, and the, it must have - put the water round, and that's what's brought it round in front of us. And the problem was, the road had been built up quite a number of times over the years, and the house was well below road level. And that's why we got so much water in. We got six feet of water in the house. And it made - made a job of it, I can tell you. But anyway, we picked up our kids and away we went. We had four then.

¹⁷ The neighbour was Aub Green per her daughter Lyn.

[0:22:09] (I): So what time was it, do you think, when - - -?

(S): 4 o'clock.

[0:22:14] (I): When you found out. Did you do anything in the house before you left? Or did you just grab what you could, and go? Or?

(S): No, there was water coming in, then. And I put things, (laughs), up on beds, thinking, "Yes, that'll be high enough". So much for that idea! Everything got covered (coughs). Everything was covered in mud. It was horrible. And a lot of stuff we could never use again. Some stuff was washed. When we got to my cousin's place, Alec, he worked for Taylor's – Joe - George Taylor, he was a mechanic, and he had his father's farm truck. So he brought the truck down, and, it could go through the flood water, and he could, he - - -.¹⁸ I don't think we did that the first day, I think it was the next day, when the water started to go down a bit, and, they, he and Ron, picked up as much clothing as they could and brought it back, and Bett and I washed it in a little - little Hoover washing machine, that she had. You know, one of those little square ones? And we washed every day, the three weeks that we were there (laughs). And of course we had - I had four children, and she had two, so we had to keep them going at the same time. But we managed, we had a lovely time together (laughs). We stopped at that house in Bishop Street, and it had a verandah all around, and that's what we camped on, at the time, so - - -.

[0:23:57] (I): Was it an enclosed verandah, at all?

(S): No. No.

[0:23:59] (I): Did you have any beds? Or?

(S): Oh, I can't remember, now. We must have had beds of some sort. They must have collected the beds from the house, I think. And dried them out. Or, got mattresses - they were giving away a lot of stuff, you know, to help people, at that time. But I honestly can't remember, how - - -. All I know, can remember, is

¹⁸ Alec James Armstrong and Elizabeth Ann "Betty" Armstrong lived at 26 Bishop Street, Dubbo (1954 Australian Electoral Rolls). Alec worked for Harold W. Taylor Ford Sales & Service, Macquarie Street, Dubbo.

that we stopped, stopped on the verandah, and we, Bett and I, shared, you know, the chores in the house, and - but mainly the washing. The washing. All this incessant washing. Because, as I say, there were six children, as well as adults, and the mud, it clung to everything. It was awful, you know. But, we survived, and we were young and able to do that, so that was, you know, we were able to cope with it all.

[0:25:02] (I): So when you left the house, what did you take with you, and how did you - - ?

(S): Oh, I had a big suitcase with clothing for the children, and for ourselves, and a few bits and pieces. I think we had one big suitcase. I can't remember if we had another one. And we had the pram that we put two children in, one child on each side of the pram, and off we went.¹⁹ And - - -

[0:25:33] (I): So was this at 4 o'clock?

(S): We didn't know where we were going. My biggest thing was to get to my Aunty Dorrie, who is up there on the thing there.²⁰ (Mrs Clarke indicates a photo of her aunt on top of a cupboard in her room)

(I): Uh hm.

(S): She lived in Nancarrow Street. But she and her husband were opening a store in Dalton Street, at that particular time.²¹ So she couldn't cope with us. She had four children of her own too, to deal with. And they - they were starting this store, so they couldn't help us. And that's how we come to go to Bett and Alec's, and that worked out well. So - - -

[0:26:13] (I): So when you left the house, with the kids, so, was your husband with you at the time?

(S): Oh yes.

[0:26:20] [0:26:24.4] (I): Did you have to walk through the flood water anywhere?

¹⁹ Ron and Lyn walked beside the cane pram per her daughter Lyn.

²⁰ Mrs Doris Vera "Dorrie" Jones (nee Cole) (1906-1994). She lived at 20 Nancarrow Street, Dubbo (1954 Australian Electoral Rolls).

²¹ Aunty Dorrie's husband's name was Henry Jones.

(S): Yes, we walked through the flood out of Serisier Street. And across to - across Brisbane Street, and then we started going up towards Nancarrow Street, which is up, further up South. And then we came back to Bishop, which is the next one down.

[0:26:41] (I): Was it still dark when you left, or...?

(S): Well, no. I don't think it was. It was becoming light by then. Because, see this was the end - it was in February?

(I): Yes.

(S): Yes, I think it was still daylight, becoming daylight by then. And - - -.

[0:27:02] (I): Was it still raining then, or had it stopped raining?

(S): Oh. I can't remember. No, I don't think it was raining. I don't think it was. I know we didn't have a lot of rain proof clothing, and it wasn't cold, which was a blessing.

[0:27:20] (I): So being summer still, I suppose, it was still fairly warm?

(S): Yes. But, anyway we made it, we got up to Auntie and, she sent us around to Bett and Alec, and that's where we stopped. And - - -.

[0:27:37] (I): It's lucky you had this family in Dubbo.

(S): We certainly are. As I said, we had family all over the place here. And anyone of them would have helped us out. But of course, some of them lived out on properties. They're not much help to you when, when you live in town.

[0:27:59] (I): No. They had things to look after there too. So what was the condition of your house after the flood? So you had 6 feet of water go through it?

(S): Yes. It was a mess! And Bett and Ron and Alec used to go down and hose, every day, to clean it out. It took them days and days to get the muck - mud out. It was really very messy. I never ever went back there, and we had a lovely little garden going, and I kept saying to them, Bett and Ron and Alec, "Bring some of the vegetables back!" (laughs). But of course the flood had absolutely ruined

them! But, and my dear lovely mother, got a big box, and sent me a box of vegetables on the train, because there was, you know, you couldn't get anything here. And I can't - - -. I think a lot of them had perished by the time they got here, because they came from Portland. But, the thought was there.

[0:29:07] (I): What was your parents' names?

(S): They were Kearns.²² I was Nora Kearns.

(I): Uh-hm.

(S): A good Irish name.

(I): Yes.

(S): I don't know where it came from (laughs). I don't know whether my father and his parents were Irish. I always had the impression that they were - came from England. But Dad never ever talked about his life, when he was a young person. He had a rotten deal, there, when he was, when he was eight or nine years old, he had to drive a bullock train to Narrandera from a place near Bathurst, with I don't know what they grew, but whatever it is, he had to take it to - and he always had a horror of people, the family, going hungry.

(I): Yes.

(S): And with the boys who mucked up, they were sent to bed without any tea, (laughs) and he would say to Mum, "You better give them kids something to eat (laughs), before they go to bed, so they can sleep." And he, cause he couldn't, couldn't cope with them not having anything to eat, 'cause he went so many times without food himself, when he was young.

[0:30:31] (I): So with the house after the flood, did you have to repaint it at all?

(S): Well, we did eventually. It took a long while. We started doing that. We did a lot of renovations over the years, but it took years for us to get enough money to do it with. And to - and, and I had a very good father-in-law, and he used to come, he was on the Railway. And he retired, and he came, and used to come

²² Mr Richard Ernest Kearns (1884-1968) and Mrs Evelyn Mary Kearns (nee Cole) (1898-1977).

and stop with us. Well, he got busy, and he painted the whole house, God love him. And then we painted the insides of the rooms, and got them back to, you know, something decent, and - but a lot of them were so, sort of you know, like this, it was very uneven, and - - -.

[0:31: 24] (I): A bit rickety, was it?

(S): Yes. But, it was doable, and, we, you know, we got by with it. But, I'll tell you what, every time it started to rain, I started to panic, (laughs) for a long time after.

[0:31:38] (I): Because there was a bit of a flood, too, the following year, wasn't there, in 1956?

(S): Mmm?

(I): There was a bit of a flood the following year, in Dubbo?

(S): Yes, I think there was. Yes. I don't think it came up as far, though. I don't think we had any trouble, problem with that flood.

[0:31:52] (I): It must have been a bit of a worry, though? (laughs)

(S): Yes, but it wasn't because - - -. Yes, it was a big worry! Because, it wasn't until after - when was Burrendong built, because that was supposed to - - -?

[0:32:08] [Simone Taylor, Local Studies Officer, answered the question]: It started building in about '58, finished in 1967.

(S): Yes. Once it was built, there was less likelihood of us having a flood.

(I): Yes.

(S): Or of any any, any depth, anyway. And by that time, we'd started to move, we'd moved up to Bultje Street, then.

[0:32:30] (I): So you said you were in your house at 1 Serisier Street for about 18 years, was it?

(S): Yes.

[0:32:35] (I): (shuffling papers). So where did your children go to school in Dubbo?

(S): To Dubbo Public School. Dubbo Primary, and then the - original Primary, and I think Lyn went there, and Ron, and then they built the one in, oh, the Infants School there. It's the Conservatorium now.²³

(I): Yes.

(S): But that was the Infants School, then. And the others all went there. And then they went to the Central School, and then they went to Dubbo High. And they all did very nicely at Dubbo High, I can tell you! It was a good school.

(I): Yes, I went there too. (laughs)

(S): You reckon it was a good school, too?

[0:33:31] (I): Yes. And were they involved - oh, did they come home for lunch?

(S): Often, yes. More often than not. And particularly when we lived in Bultje Street, it was only up the corner, so they used to always come home. And I used to have a hot meal. And Ron used to come home for that. And then, I was free for the afternoon, wasn't I? (both laugh). Didn't have to cook tea!

(I): That would be good.

(S): I started that when the babies were small. I found it was easier to do a hot meal in the middle of the day than it was at night, because for some reason, babies are always more difficult at that time of the day than they are at other times. Or I found so.

[0:34:14] (I): So were your children involved in sport at school?

(S): Mmm?

(I): Were your children involved in sport at school?

Yes. Lyn always played netball, or basketball, it was then. Ron played football, and Jan, I don't know what it was - I think she played something. But Trish was very good at sport. She was the little one, and she played, she played - I think she played basketball too, netball, and very good at it. She ended up being a sports

²³ Macquarie Conservatorium.

mistress, and went teaching, and that's what she's still doing. They all played, more or less.

[0:35:07] (I): And was Wendy the Captain of Dubbo High School?

(S): Yes, she was.

(I): In 1979?

(S): Yes.

(I): That's really great.

(S): And she, she's gone on to be captain of a lot of things, these days (laughs). She's, you know, doing very well in what she does.

[0:35:25] (I): Mrs Clarke, thank you very much for talking to me today about your experiences with when the Queen visited Dubbo, and in the 1955 flood, and living in Dubbo. It's been great to talk with you. So thank you.

(S): Thank you very much for doing so. I have enjoyed it. Been interesting.

[0:35:44] (I): Thank you, Mrs Clarke.

(S): My pleasure, darling. If I can help you again, don't hesitate to ask (both laugh). But I think that's enough from me.