

## **Don Lawie Interview Cyclone Winifred**

Interviewer Name: Kohath Mutch

Participants Name: Don Lawie

K Q Could you tell me your name?

D A My name is Donald Charles Lawie

K Q Which cyclone did you experience? And what year it was?

D A I experience the three that are under interest um Agnes in '56, Winifred in '86 and Larry in when was that 2006 I can't remember

K Yes 2006

D Yes we might do Winifred I think it's the most important one I think.

K Q Can you tell me where you were when the cyclone struck?

D A WE were at home I live at East Russell

K Q What type of structure did you shelter in, was it timber or brick, or was it another type of structure?

D A It's a low set house made out of timber.

K Q Was the structure you sheltered in damaged during the cyclone?

D A Not at all. It was built by the Kruckow family. The Kruckow family owned the sawmill at Miriwinni and it was built out of the best timber.

K Q Did you or anyone sheltering with you suffer any injuries?

D A No.

K Q Were you given any warning that the cyclone was going to hit?

D A Yes I believe we did we had um sirens on the radio and there was um notices on the television so we had plenty of warning that it was going to happen.

K Q If any what response was there, for example SES?

D A None out our way, there is a very good reason for that our bridge floods very easily and immediately after the cyclone for over a week afterwards the bridge was flooded and nobody could get to our side of the river.

K Q Do you remember how long the cyclone lasted?

D A I understand it started in the morning and went on all day and fizzled out somewhere in the night time

K Q If you can remember, can you tell me how you felt during the worst of the storm?

D A Yes I felt quite good ah at the worst of the storm we had 4 children at home at the time and they were fairly young from 10 to about 16 and at the real height of the storm I could see it was cutting along the edge of the trees at the front of the house so all four kids and myself went out and went outside the shelter of the trees and I had a bucket in my hand to pick up something and once we got outside the shelter of the trees it was like walking out a door and the wind hit us and nearly knocked the smallest child down and it picked the bucket from my hand and threw it way away but

we and so we just stepped back a couple of steps into the tree shelter again and we said wow wasn't that fun.

K Q What is the most significant memory of that cyclone?

D A Um the bit I've just told you I think.

K Q Could you tell me how the event has affected you in the years since?

D A Not much um we um something like Larry that the few people that lived on that side of the river got together um Percy Watt and his son cut their way down to our place with a chainsaw and the people on the other side cut their way up and we all got together the next morning and had a cup of tea and had a talk about things and decided that everybody was happy nobody was in danger or hurt uh and it was a matter of getting the road clear and getting down to the river and then waiting for the council to get across and do some more work but um it was not a great deal of trauma um for us.

K Q Have you got any other information that you would like to share?

D A Um it was of course a great event and its something that you don't forget and it would have been a bigger event in the minds of our children it was their first cyclone, but where we live out there we were fairly isolated anyway we are used of looking after ourselves um but the big thing I remember that night was the television was really good there was a girl on Channel 10 perhaps who gave us good information she was good and clear and happy all the time and we sort of related to her. We the town power was out but we weren't on town power we were on generator and hydro electric and the hydro electric went crazy of course. But um I think you mentioned a significant item we were having diner that night and our smallest daughter Allison who was 10 at the time was sitting at the head of the table and she could see outside and she said dad that brown cupboard has gone down to the bottom of the veranda, and I said right-o, and she said dad its come up again, dad it's gone down again, so I said Allison sit down the other end, it was all fairly fun, we knew our house was safe we knew we wouldn't flood, and we were quite confident.