

Statement of Witness

Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry

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|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Name of Witness | Ruby May JENSEN |
| Date of Birth | |
| Address and contact details | |
| Occupation | Housewife |
| Officer taking statement | Det Insp Mark Ainsworth |
| Date taken | 23/3/2011 |

Ruby May JENSEN states;

1. I am a married woman, [REDACTED] years of age and I reside at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Postmans Ridge. I have lived at this address since the 16th June, 1969. My house is a lowset brick house situated on the higher side of Rocky Creek with the creek running across the bottom of my property.
2. Whilst living in the Postman's Ridge area I have been on the committee for the Postmans Ridge Pioneer Memorial Hall since 1977 and have held the position of secretary for a number of years. I am also a committee member of the Queensland Country Womens Association, Withcott Branch since 1970 and was formerly a member of the Withcott Rural Fire Service (RFS) in the 1970's. In my position as Secretary of the Postmans Ridge Pioneer Memorial Hall I hold one of the keys to access the building.
3. I recall the flood events of December 2010 and January, 2011. During December I was away on holidays and returned to Postmans Ridge on 27 December, 2010. On arriving home on that date I noticed that Rocky Creek had risen to a high level which I had never seen before. I recall on the 28th or 29th December, 2010 my neighbours Tim and Sonia FITTKAU were evacuated from their house due to six inches of water flowing through their house. They were evacuated to Toowoomba.

Signature of witness
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Signature of officer [REDACTED]

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4. On Monday 10th January, 2011 about 2pm I was on the verandah of my house when I saw a large quantity of water running down the road. The water was moving pretty swiftly. As a result I went back inside my house then returned to the verandah after a few minutes. At this time the water had reached my house and I had about 12 inches of water through my house. I got towels and tried to clean up the water to avoid damage to the contents of my house. At the same time the water arrived I lost power and the landline telephone to my house. I had a mobile phone which is with Telstra and commenced receiving a lot of phone calls from people telling me what was happening. At this time I became aware that there was major flooding to the region.
5. At a time after 2pm when the water had receded a little, I went over to my neighbour's house. This neighbour is Brian WILLMET. Once at his property there were several neighbours gathered on his property. At this time I learnt that three houses in the vicinity of my residence had been washed away. One of these houses belonged to Sylvia BAILLIE who lived at [REDACTED] Postmans Ridge. Brian had commented that he had seen water breaking the creek banks and was forming up in waves in doing so.
6. By about 4pm the water had receded quite a bit. I returned home then commenced to clear debris off my access driveway to enable me to get my car out. I remained at home on the Monday night.

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7. On Tuesday 11 January, 2011 I visited one of my other neighbours, John and Sharon COLLINS who own a greyhound training track. I remained at their house for a period of time then returned to my residence to be met by Brian WILLMET and the RFS. Brian rang my sons and told them I was missing. When I returned home Brian contacted my sons and advised them that I was safe. Brian also informed me that the local RFS had also been looking for me to get the keys for the Pioneer Memorial Hall.
8. At about 10 am on 11 January, 2011 I went to the Postmans Ridge Pioneer Memorial Hall and saw that the building had been opened up. I later found out that the RFS had used bolt cutters on the padlock to cut the lock to gain access to the building. From the time of my arrival we commenced utilising the hall as an evacuation centre.
9. I took on a co-ordination role at this evacuation centre in conjunction with Carlo CORNEAZ from the RFS. The RFS provided a generator at the hall which provided us with electricity. They provided continuous maintenance and servicing of the generator in order for it to continue to work. The evacuation centre remained open till Thursday 13th January, 2011 when it was closed down by a representative of the Lockyer Valley Council. I cannot recall who this person was but I do recall him saying there was an evacuation centre at Gatton or Murphys Creek Hotel which was also being used as an evacuation centre. As a result we ceased operation as an evacuation centre. All bedding and material we had sourced to assist the community at the Postmans Ridge evacuation centre was transported to Gatton.

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10. The Postmans Ridge evacuation centre assisted in providing food, supplies and electricity for the community. The food provided for the centre was supplied by members of the local community. Bedding was also supplied by the local community. Numerous people used the electricity to charge mobile phones which was a necessity as the landline phone system was inoperable. On the night of the 11 January, 2011 7 people slept at the evacuation centre as they were affected by the floods.
11. The Postmans Ridge Memorial Hall had never previously been used as an evacuation centre and is not known as the community evacuation centre, however the location of the hall on a raised section of land is the obvious choice for an evacuation centre for the local community.
12. Throughout the flood incident there were significant communication issues in that we simply were not informed as to what was going on with respect to response or recovery. No one in authority attended the evacuation centre to ensure everything was alright nor to see if further resources were required. The only time we saw the council is when they came and told us we had to close the evacuation centre down.
13. Leading up to the flood on the 10 January, 2011 there was no warning of the flooding. I do not have a computer to check BOM sites. In this area the most effective way for the community to receive warnings is by way of mouth. In relation to preparation for a future flooding event something needs to be done with regards to clearing of creek lines and waterways. The creeks in this area have not been cleaned out for years. I also believe

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consideration for improvements in communicating messages to the community in times of a natural disaster needs to be improved. Even basic information as to who is in charge would have been good.

14. Basically I believe the local Postmans Ridge Community fended for ourselves. The unity in the community was excellent with people lending assistance to one another and putting other people first before dealing with their own issues.

15. Attached are photos depicting : 1. Photo of Rocky Creek on 11/1/2011, 2. Photo of bridge on Murphys Creek road crossing Rocky Creek at the bottom of my property, 3. a ruler indicating the height of approximately 8 inches which shows the height of the water that went through my house.

x
R.M.JENSEN

Justices Act 1886

I acknowledge by virtue of section 110A(5)(c)(ii) of the Justices Act 1886 that:

- (1) This written statement by me dated 23/3/11 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 5 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and
- (2) I make this statement knowing that, if it were admitted as evidence, I may be liable to prosecution for stating in it anything that I know is false.

x Signature

Signed at Postmans Ridge this day of April 2011

Signature of witness x
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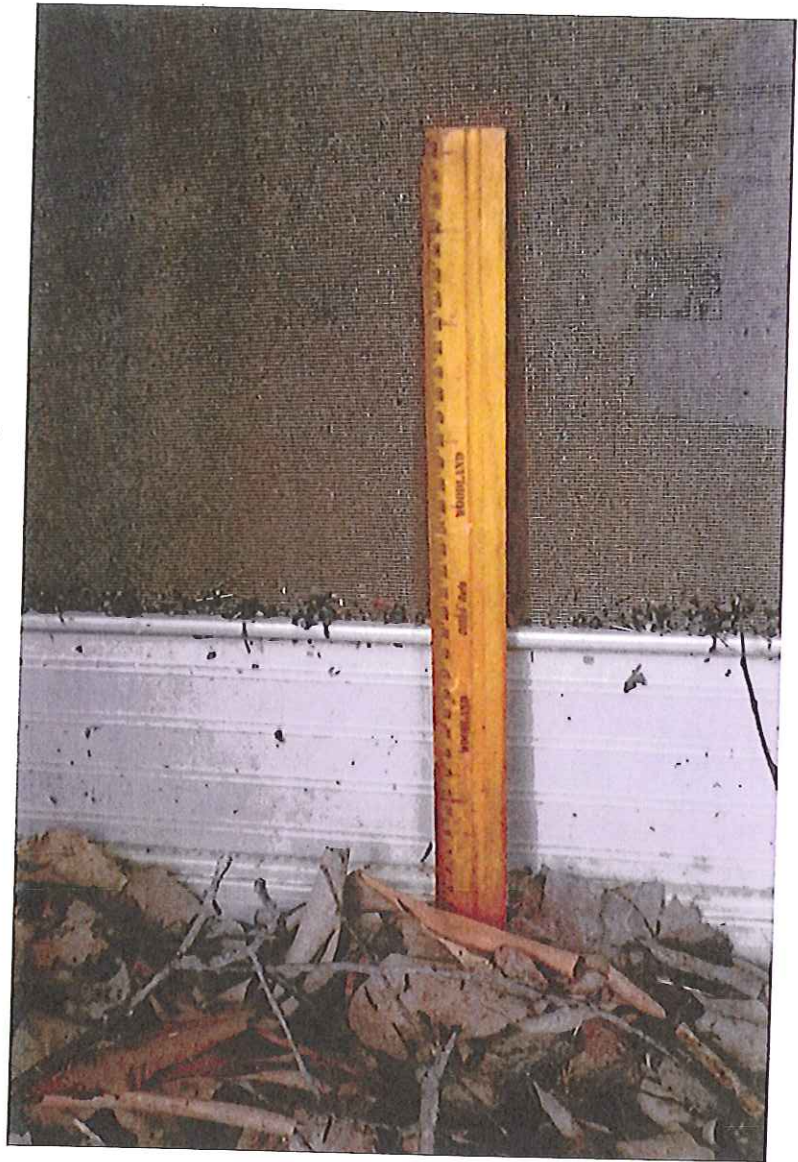
Signature of officer x



1. Rocky Creek.

2. BRIDGE CROSSING ROCKY CREEK ON MURPHY'S CREEK ROAD
AT THE BOTTOM OF MY PROPERTY.





3. Ruler indicating inches of water through my house.





30/03/2011 07:41