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Flood survivor stories shared with State Library

A collection of stories recorded by Toowoomba and Lockyer Valley flood survivors and rescuers has been donated to the State Library of Queensland.

The collection of broadcast quality recordings, telephone interviews, photographs and videos was compiled by local journalist Amanda Gearing.

The interviews with 120 survivors became part of Ms Gearing's book *The Torrent: Toowoomba and Lockyer Valley January 2011* published by UQP.

State Librarian Janette Wright said that the Amanda Gearing Collection is extremely valuable to record this devastating moment in Queensland's history.

"The flash flooding that hit Toowoomba and the Lockyer Valley caused the loss of many lives and, in places like Grantham, nearly every house on the floodplain area suffered major damage with a number of houses washed off their foundations and some totally destroyed," Ms Wright said.

"Video footage of this 'inland tsunami' was aired around the world and will remain in many people's memories as the defining image of the 2011 Queensland floods.

"I am deeply moved by the determination of the survivors to share their experiences so that others can have the chance to learn and understand what they went through."

Oral histories, photographs and videos were gathered from survivors in Spring Bluff, Murphys Creek, Toowoomba, Withcott, Postmans Ridge, Helidon, Carpendale and Grantham.

"These materials will be able to be accessed by all Queenslanders via State Library's online catalogue, as well as other flood-related items in the State Library's collection, including oral history recordings from the 1974 floods, digital stories relating to the 2011 floods and photographs of the 1890s floods, as showcased in the *Floodlines* exhibition," Ms Wright said.

"State Library is continuing to share contemporary and historical memories of Queensland's floods through its *Floodlines* program of stories, exhibitions and events.

"With photographs, flood maps, videos and augmented reality technology, these exhibitions pay tribute to the community spirit of Queenslanders, both in the past and present."

Floodlines is open until 19 August 2012.

Visit www.slq.qld.gov.au to search the State Library's collections or www.slq.qld.gov.au/whats-on for more information about *Floodlines*.

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