

## January 2011 Flood in Centenary Suburbs



For many long term residents of the Centenary Suburbs there was a feeling of déjà vu as the nightmare of the January floods brought chaos, water and mud through their properties. Some not affected in 1974 were not spared this time as the rain fell relentlessly and the Wivenhoe Dam releases made this a “different” flood to 1974. Residents close to the Brisbane River heard the water roaring past their homes for many days before the flooding. Homes and businesses close to the river and creeks, or in low lying areas rushed to move their belongings to higher ground and evacuate before the expected peak on the night of 11/12 January. The swelling of local creeks added to the volume of water flooding the suburbs as many single storey homes in Westlake, Middle Park, Jindalee, Oxley, 17 Mile Rocks and Riverhills were completely inundated.

On the morning of 12 January residents woke to find a surreal water landscape had covered familiar landmarks. The strength of the water had ripped boats from their moorings, swept away pontoons and bent pylons. Possessions were carried along the path of the river, becoming dangerous debris in the muddy brown water. The Centenary suburbs were partly inaccessible for several days with water on the Centenary Highway preventing traffic accessing the Centenary Bridge at Jindalee. Fortunately, the peak was two metres less than expected but still enough to cause extensive damage in the suburbs. 35 of the 45 parks in the Jamboree Ward were badly damaged by water and thick mud, including the very popular Rocks Riverside Park.

The Jindalee Golf Club, Jindalee Bowls Club and Jindalee Pool were inundated and will cost millions to repair. McLeod Country Golf Club had damage to their greens but the clubhouse was spared. The Centenary Rowing Club shed was only officially opened in September 2010. Members evacuated the boats before the shed was completely covered in water and their new pontoon floated away. The Thomas Macleod Memorial, unveiled by Lord Mayor

Campbell Newman in December 2010 went under water. Shops in Jindalee and part of the Jindalee State School were flooded.

As the water receded leaving a coating of sludge, came the devastating realisation for residents, club members and business owners that the “clean up” would be a huge undertaking. However, an army of volunteers descended on the suburbs and boosted the spirits of all those affected as they helped with the clean-up.

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