

NIGHTMARE OF THE FLOODS

AN INTERESTING LETTER

This is a very interesting letter we received from Pamela Craigie, of 84 Barwan Street, Narrabri. Pamela said:—

Dear Editor,

I have never written to you so I decided to write now. I go to the Narrabri Intermediate High School and am in second year. I always look forward to *Dawn* every month, and I enjoy "Pete's" page very much. I have seen some of my relation's names in it and so I thought I would write to you. I am going to send a photo of my brother Michael and I hope to be seeing it in next month's issue. In Narrabri, there are not many dark people, and it gets very lonesome sometimes, so I wonder if you can get me some pen-friends from Caroonna, Coonabarabran, Sydney, Moree and Boggabilla. Now I will tell you some news about the flood.

One Saturday we were asked by the police to get some of our furniture and personal belongings to a higher place. The river was rising very fast. Trucks, cars, vans, horses and all the other vehicles you could mention were carrying women, children and personal belongings out of immediate danger. We stayed at the Salvation Army Hall. We watched the water rise until midnight, and then a bit bored by waiting for something to happen, we went to bed.

Through the night I could hear the water flowing down the streets, but decided to lay in bed until it was on the footpath. When we woke up, the water was just coming on to the verandah. In less than an hour the water was four foot deep in our place.

Narrabri was now like a river running madly through the streets. People were clambering on to housetops and fighting their way to higher ground. Two cows passed the hall, about breakfast time. It was a breakfast without any food. Men got up on to the roof and waved a sheet to drop food down for us. The Scouts' Hall, near the river, was swept off its foundation with a loud crash and floated like a toy ship till it disintegrated against the town bridge.

Hundreds of men and women and children were gathered in distress at the Town Hall. At the Hall, where we were staying, women sat up for hours nursing their children in their arms. A woman gave birth to a baby at the Town Hall.

The police had two boats, but they were useless in the raging currents. They were turned over or carried away.

Helicopters came and carried out remarkable rescues. One, was to take off a farmer who was sitting on his horse in the flood, afraid to move for fear he would be swept away.

In the food dropping a man was hit on the head with a loaf of bread and suffered for weeks afterwards.

The girls at the telephone exchange gave it away when the water was 4 feet deep.

The loud roar of R.A.A.F. and newspaper planes came above the noise of the flood. A Lincoln bomber dropped food from a parachute to a family living on a tank stand. On that tank stand, too, a baby was born.

When the water went down, people with young babies and children were taken out of the town in case disease broke out. We were taken to Balta, about 32 miles from Narrabri.

Well, I cannot think of anything else so I will end now hoping you enjoyed my letter.

[Editor: We certainly did, Pamela, it was a well written and most interesting letter.]



Lynette, Vanessa and Christine Barney, of Urungon, Queensland.