

Interviewer - Julie Christie

Interviewee - Brooke Lowrey

JC: This is Julie Christie, I'm talking to Brooke Lowrey ... at the chemist at Cardiff. Brooke can you tell us what happened to you on Friday during the storm?

BL: Um yeah. It was about five o'clock in the afternoon when Vicki said that we should probably close cos the storm was getting quite big. Then at about quarter past five, um, me Jonathon and Bill were standing at the big back window looking out the back and could see a car trying to come through and realised it was about half way deep in water. So we were about to close and when I turned around there was er ...quite a big gush of water coming in through the front door. It was an au .. like... because like it's an automatic door it was sort of coming in really quickly and we we sorta looked and we couldn't quite wouldn't be able to close the door and there was nothing we could do and um then within about five minutes the water had risen to probably my ankles and um we were just tryin' to pick up things and rushing around and Bill was [spreading?] and Jonathon was running out the front and tried to go get his car out the back. Luckily I didn't drive my car to work that day. The next minute you know I'm in knee deep water and Bill's trying to lift up the computers and things like that and I was um he said "take your shoes off" and I took one step and then I was on a piece of glass so I put my shoes back on and I was [frightened?]... and I rang my mum and I said "Mum you gotta get here quick because you know its flooding and I'm in knee deep water" and she said "just don't worry about it. I'll be there in ten minutes" like she didn't even realise how bad it really was. Um Jonathon Jonathon came back in and bent down and ripped out the dispensary computers while all the power was still on like. We had no idea what he was doing. But luckily he did because he saved a lot of information which was really good. Um then the next thing you know there's this er guy Doug Parkinson one of our regular um customers came in and asked us if we um we could do his script for him and um he said "No, we can't do it sorry Doug" and then he stood around looking at things and then the next thing you know his friend's in there and he he said "Oh there's no water in the pub". He'd had a few drinks and you could tell cos he was in his undies ... um ...So um he came over and then he picked up one of our pink hats which was already in the water and put it on his head. He said "Do you wanna come back to the pub with me?" and I said "No, no ... I'm waiting here. I'm not going

anywhere without Bill or anything like that". And then you know the water was just gushing like. It was really scary and then he came and he went back to the pub then he came back about five minutes later and said "Do you wanna come on ... there's no water in there?".. so I was like "Okay" and you know I had no idea where Bill and Jonathon were because I was just running around trying to lift things up and Jonathon got kept coming in and out, in and out and Bill was just trying to call people and look for things ways to get out and shut the doors and things like that um so I walked across the road with this guy and when I went out into the road it dropped down nearly to like nearly `bout my shoulders and like I was walking in shoulder deep water and I get into the the pub and there's people in there just drinking just having a good time in ankle deep water and I'm just thinking oh God and I'm soaking wet and it was so embarrassing ... and then luckily about five minutes later my mum turns up up the hill so I had to get back in the water and walk all the way up the hill to get to my mum and then it took about two hours to get home. It was good

JC: Was it dark by the time you decided to go over to the hotel?

BL: Ah yeah it was pitch black pretty much, you couldn't see a thing. All you could see out the front was um the people standing out the front across the road and the cars that were underneath water by the time I went out there so that's all you could see really and other than that there was nothing like just ...it was absolutely pitch black

JC: Were you really scared at any time?

BL: Yes I was. When I rang my mum and she said not to worry about it I was absolutely freaking out. She just didn't understand the extent of like how just it was in a matter of like ten minutes it was just really so high and I just didn't know what to do and I had nowhere to go. There was nobody there and like everybody else was just stressing out about everything I was just sorta sitting here saying "Oh my God like I don't know what to do!" and yeah it was just really freaky like at that point I think I sorta just got really worried because, you know, mum didn't know what time she could get here cos she was in the traffic where all the floods were going as well.

JC: What about since then? Have you had nightmares or anything like that?

BL: Um ...that night actually when we got home we like the power and stuff had

gone out at our house and um it was really heavily raining and we've got a pool and stuff like that and all I could hear was the rain coming down and I'm just thinking no I wanna get outta here now cos I thought I was really scared that you know one second we'd be just sitting around doing nothing and then the next thing a big gush of water was gonna come in like I didn't know. I found out one of my really close friends he'd been evacuated from his house so that sorta freaked me out. I needed to go somewhere where it wasn't raining but there was nowhere that we could go really ... the roads and everything was blocked off so

JC: What suburb was that?

BL: Barnsley ... yeah the only other thing I can really think of is um after it all happened on like our customers regular customers would come in and be like "Were you the little girl that got carried out to the pub by the guy in his undies?" and I'd be like "I didn't get carried out by him" It was like a really good story like cos it was on the radio and everything that um the pub and Dr Ray next door um rang up the ABC Radio and said that I got carried out and all that sorta stuff and that I was a really good danger and I was going to drown and all this sorta stuff ... and I was pretty safe during the whole thing like I knew I had people around me and stuff. But it was like a pretty good story like being carried out by 'Captain Underpants'.

JC: Was there much damage in Barnsley that you saw?

BL: In my street it was okay but towards um around Prince and Victoria Street type thing um that's where my friend got evacuated from because its right near a drain so they got evacuated. Also off ah we live on the corner of Charlton and Bendigo and when you go down the hill there's like there's just a big paddock ... it was like a river like you coulda got a boogie board and go rafting in it or something and it was just unbelievable how much water down there like, yeah it was and I mean we had a tree fallen over out the front of my Nan's house. She lives around the corner from us as well. Umm so they had power out for nearly two weeks like they were living at our house for a long time. So around our area sorta we couldn't really get out from where we were.

JC: And how long were you without power at home?

BL: Ah for four and a half days... yeah

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