

The Great Flood / Black February 1893

HAZARD TYPE Cyclone, Flood

DATE Feb 1893

DESCRIPTION Queensland was affected by three tropical disturbances (today's tropical cyclone), producing the most devastating floods Queensland had ever experienced in recorded history.

Then, in June of the same year, Maryborough experience another flood.

1st FEBRUARY 1893

A tropical disturbance crossed the Central Queensland coast north of Yeppoon. It was later named "Buninyong" after the ship which recorded the pressure near the Percy Island off Mackay. The cyclone crossed the coast and merged with an east coast low near the Sunshine Coast. The one hundred miles per hour winds and Barometer reading of 28.646 (969hPa) means it would be the equivalent of a Category 3 Cyclone.

Over the next few days, flooding peaked in Maryborough higher than any recorded flood before at 12.27m in the Mary River.

Newspapers reported 130 homes were washed away along with the Mary River Bridge which was later replaced with the current Lamington Bridge.

Two men drowned and a family was missing after trying to cross the river. Four children drowned and a police officer drowned in a rescue attempt.

11th FEBRUARY 1893

A second tropical disturbance crossed the coast between Bundaberg and Hervey Bay. Barometric Pressure dropped to 982 hPa (Category 2 Cyclone) on the "Fitzroy" in Hervey Bay on the night of the 10th.

A 150-ton schooner was wrecked at Inskip Point where the body of a man washed ashore.

17th FEBRUARY 1893

A third tropical disturbance crossed the Queensland Coast between Agnes Waters and Bundaberg causing flooding in the Mary River. In some areas, it was worse than the first flood.

10th JUNE 1893

A severe low pressure system crossed the coast near Rockhampton and then moved down west of Brisbane. Maryborough flooded once again. On the 11th of June, it was reported the water was nine feet over the wharves.

Images:

University of Queensland, Philp Family Collection



Richmond Street, Maryborough



Kent Street, Maryborough



Wharf Street, Maryborough



Bazaar Street, Maryborough

References:

[Images](#)

Clement L. Wragge, Government Meteorologist, was on board the Buninyong. You can read his account of the situation here. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/3556012>

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/65755366>

<https://artsandculture.google.com/story/the-black-february-flood-queensland-state-archives/KQXRHqoJ0avwJQ?hl=en>

<https://fclibrarieslocalstudies.blogspot.com/2018/12/maryborough-flooding.html>

<https://fclibrarieslocalstudies.blogspot.com/2011/09/mighty-mary-in-flood.html>