



Press Release

November 2024

Help Us Preserve the Story of Cyclone Gabrielle: Seeking Volunteers for Interviews

Join us in capturing the untold stories of those affected by Cyclone Gabrielle across Hawke's Bay.

Hawke's Bay Knowledge Bank, in partnership with the Hastings District Council and Radio Hawke's Bay, is launching a vital project the 'Oral History Pilot Project' to record verbal and photographic experiences related to Cyclone Gabrielle.

We seek volunteers to help collect these stories, ensuring that this devastating event's impacts and personal experiences are preserved for future generations. These interviews will be conducted voluntarily.

We aim to complete 50 interviews by the end of March 2025. Training will begin from Monday 11 November 2024. Anyone can join the project throughout this time.

To complete this important project, we are looking for:

- **Interview Volunteers:** We need individuals willing to interview those impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle. Volunteers will be trained to use a simple recording system that works through a mobile phone and given guidance on asking sensitive, thoughtful questions to help people share their stories. Volunteers are encouraged to interview their friends or loved ones
- **Cyclone Survivors:** If you experienced Cyclone Gabrielle firsthand, we want to record your thoughts, experiences, and reflections. Whether you faced life-threatening situations, received help, or supported others, your story is vital. We aim to capture these personal accounts, especially from communities that may have yet to receive media attention.

Hastings Mayor Sandra Hazlehurst shared her thoughts on the importance of this initiative, "Cyclone Gabrielle was one of the most devastating natural disasters our region has faced, and this project is an important way to capture the impact it had on people and preserve their stories for the future. It is wonderful to be working with the Knowledge Bank to make this great initiative happen."

Similarly, Kelly Reid, Station Manager of Radio Hawke's Bay said, "Radio Hawke's Bay is proud to be working alongside The Knowledge Bank for the Oral History Pilot Project. It is important for future generations to hear from the people rather than an interpretation of events by a historian. From these accounts, a greater understanding and preventative measures can be put into place."

If you are interested in conducting interviews or sharing your own story of Cyclone Gabrielle, we encourage you to get involved:

Please get in touch with Hawkes Bay Knowledge Bank volunteer Grant Nicholson at 027 213 4073 or 06 833 5333, for email cyclone2023@knowledgebank.org.nz

The Hawke's Bay Knowledge Bank is a growing digital archive of Hawke's Bay, made possible by residents who donate historical materials to be digitised. Run by the Digital Archives Trust, a charitable organisation, The Knowledge Bank preserves and shares local history, letters, photos, diaries, and newspapers—freely accessible on our public website.

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