

Windstorm

7 June 1994

If it isn't one thing, it's another. On May 31st we experienced a windstorm that one expert said would only occur about once in every thousand years.

They called it a microburst and some of the gusts accompanying the storm were 120 to 125 miles per hour and that was hurricane velocity. The wind came up and was accompanied by heavy rain. But it was the wind that caught our attention. The trees were bending over almost to the ground and sometimes breaking off or being uprooted. Limbs, twigs, and branches were everywhere, smashing cars, blowing out windows, and causing all kinds of damage. Power was off all over the city.

It was the day of Lee Carson's funeral and I was one of the speakers. Ida-Rose and I were ready to leave for the Berg Mortuary where the funeral was being held. The worst part of the storm climaxed at about 1:00 pm and it was almost pitch dark. Ida-Rose was in the house standing by a south bedroom window looking out at the storm and saw something coming towards her. It took a few seconds to realize it was our lovely 40-foot tall blue spruce tree falling toward the house and Ida-Rose. The tree was so tall that it landed right on top of the middle of the roof and when it fell there was a big "pop." Then the lights went out. The storm only lasted about 10 minutes, thank goodness, because in those 10 minutes it did millions of dollars of damage, especially to trees but also to homes and business establishments.

Well, what we did was round up all of the flashlights that we could carry. When the funeral was over, we went to the burial ground. The lights were out all over town and when we got to the mortuary, the lights were out there. They decided to go ahead; it was too sudden to call it off. They rounded up four flashlights and from somewhere two lanterns of some kind. Bros. Christensen, Smith and I gave our talks by flashlight.

One of the unfortunate things was that it was so dark that no one could see the beautiful flowers that people had sent. One kind thing was that there was a window just where Kay Carson greeted people so that helped somewhat.

After the storm quit, the sun came out, and it turned out to be quite a nice afternoon for the burial and luncheon afterwards at our chapel.

All of the speakers did a superb job. It is one funeral that I will never forget.

We were quite anxious to get home and examine and take pictures of the damage. The electricity was off for us until 2:00 pm the following day.

Other damage of interest included the BYU press, which went without electricity for another day and a half.

Fortunately, we had insurance that covered the over \$10,000 in damages. Now we had the problem of finding matching wood to go underneath the eaves of the house. The insurance people were not willing to find matching wood to go under the eaves. We had to do our own search. We must have hunted for more than two months before we found a cutter and the right wood to fit in the damaged gaps.

There was one other phenomenon in the case of our neighbor, Jens Jonsson, who did not have electric power and we did. So we strung a cord across the street from our house to theirs so the food in their freezer would not thaw. We still miss our Blue Spruce, but we brought a Scotch pine in from our tree nursery in Payson to take its place.