**Essays on Mount Crosby - Ezekiel Allen**

There's no namesake street, creek, or hill in the district to remember bricklayer Ezekiel Allen, but his memory is safe enough in the minds of a generation of school children that will, I hope, tell their children and others about this tough little character. Ezekiel was born in Belfast in 1864 and emigrated to Australia with his new wife, Miss Jean McMurtrie of Glasgow, in 1885. At first he was employed on bricklaying jobs in the city, including the building of a new fire station and the original Brisbane Town Hall.

In 1890 he was one of the first men employed at the Mount Crosby works, putting up bricks with unusual skill for the contractor Chamberlain & Wylie. He worked on the pumping station's impressive 132 foot chimney and in association with that structure did a joyful courageous thing that secured his memory for generations to come; on its completion he slid a plank across the 11ft opening of its top, and there, to the surprise of all, stood on his head.

It might have ended a lot worse for Ezekiel, but instead he survived quite nicely and went on to work for another forty years at Mount Crosby. His obituary gives a hint of the hard life and isolation on offer to the early families of Mount Crosby when it says "after spending forty years there, he came in to reside during his retirement with his daughter, Mrs J. J. McNamara, of Pine Mountain Road".

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