**Essays on Mount Crosby - The Anstead Dam Plan 1907**

In the days before any substantial dam crossed the Brisbane River there was a lot of debate about where best to put one, for there is a saying in the business that "you're not a man until you've built a dam", and since it rhymes it must be true. In any case, everyone has an opinion about dams and this early debate made great copy for newspapers, just as it would now.

The debate reached grand proportions when New York-based engineer Allan Hazen produced a forward looking report for the Brisbane Board of Water Works in October 1907 advocating, among other things, that dams should be considered for Cabbage Tree Creek (now Lake Manchester), the Stanley River (now Somerset Dam) and on the Brisbane River eight miles below the current pumping station, which places it in the vicinity of Sugars Quarry, Anstead. Well, that was two out of three correct for Allan, but building the "Anstead dam" implied abandoning the Mount Crosby pumping station and rebuilding it at Anstead - which in turn would consign Mount Crosby to irrelevance.

In the two years following Hazen's report, amazing and acrimonious things happened at the Board (including its complete dissolution and replacement by the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board in 1909). Those rancorous days, of which almost no Mount Crosbian had any perception, determined whether our town would prosper under the influx of workers required to build and run the Brisbane River water supply scheme, or simply shrink and disappear.

Fortunately for us, the President of the new Board, EJT Manchester, aligned himself with those members who thought the Mount Crosby pumping station should stay (oh, thank-you Sir Alfred Cowley and Mr Walkeden), and a voluminous report by the Board's engineer, Mr Kemp, was used to support Manchester's side of the argument. The principal reason for keeping the pumping station at Mount Crosby, said Mr Kemp, was to have the station eight miles closer to the proposed dam at Cabbage Tree Creek so as to reduce the loss of water as it flowed down the river - and when it became necessary, its nearness would allow the Board to build a light steel pipeline to convey the waters without loss at all (and also to use the clear lake waters exclusively when the Brisbane River turned turbid).

How ironic, that the pipeline that was the basis of this hard fought decision was never built, yet Mount Crosby went on to prosper as though all its planets had fallen into line.

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