**Essays on Mount Crosby - The Weir Bridge**

The weir bridge is not the first bridge nor even the first weir the to cross the river near the pumping station, but it does represent the eventual solution to a couple of problems that plagued the Board after they established a water supply pumping station at Mount Crosby in 1890, namely:

* That the river, which was required to provide the water for Brisbane, often ran dry and at other times ran high; and
* That the coal fired pumping station was on the opposite side of the river to the coal (and all the goods and services of Ipswich).

The father of the Mount Crosby scheme, Alexander Stewart, knew that a weir would be required eventually and when making his case in favour of Mount Crosby said, *"...its chief advantage lies in the existence of a rock bar a short distance below the proposed intake. This will form an admirable foundation for a weir, which can be built when increased demand renders it necessary...*".

Alex was describing the rocky bar about 100 metres downstream from the pumping station, though it was not on that bar, but one a few hundred metres further away that the Board built its first weir. Not that it was a great success - poor little thing that stretched halfway across the river, hoping, in vain as it turned out, that water would not bypass it to the west. The Board summed it up for themselves when (in 1906) they wrote it had "become useless and was therefore valueless", which is a bit harsh really because I spent many afternoons of my youth swimming and fishing and walking near it; enjoying, above all, the sound of its cascade.

A weir was certainly needed, and so was a decent bridge that couldn't be washed away. The Board had lost two bridges and was well into the third when their Engineer for Water Supply, John Peart, proposed to build a "new" weir of solid concrete incorporating an overbridge higher than the average flood.

At a cost of £52,000 it seemed expensive at the time, but evidently it was money well spent. The weir is now 90 years old and, aside from a small hiccup in 1927, it has withstood two great floods and a multitude of minor ones. Who could forget how the waters of 2011 bent downstream as they receded, fooling us into thinking our weir had failed; and how then our faith was restored as the boiling floodwaters took their usual shape and there it stood; washed, but not washed away.

Col Hester