After the great fire of 1907 that destroyed 66 shops in Murwillumbah, action was taken by the fledgling Municipal Council that had only been in existence for five years to investigate a water supply scheme for Murwillumbah.

The first part of the scheme was to build a reservoir on hospital hill with six chains (121 m) of water main. The water was pumped direct from the river and used for fire fighting and general use. All houses had tank water.

The next step was to build a dam to supply the Municipality. A number of places were under consideration, including the Dunibble side of Mt Nullum (the Dum Dum area), Mt Warning (or officially Korrumbyn Creek) and a pumping station at Boat Harbour that was favoured by the Public Works Department.

In 1911, the Council decided on a dam with a gravity fed line from Mt Warning.

1918: The Mount Warning Scheme

Located in the steeper regions of the Mt Warning base, the dam supplied untreated water to Murwillumbah.

- 113 m long and 13.7 m high dam wall.
- 1.1 ML reservoir at Hospital Hill.
- 150 mm diameter pipeline along Old Lismore and Byangum Roads to link the dam and reservoir.
- 0.9 m high small pipe head weir on North Korrumbyn Creek to supplement demand.
The idea of the Mt Warning Dam being the solution to the town’s water supply was short lived. During hot weather when the dam was about half full, the water would turn green, making it unfit for human consumption.

It was abandoned after a log became jammed in the scour valve during a flood and could not be removed.

Although the old Mount Warning Dam is partly silted and overgrown, it still serves the locals in its vicinity.

Clustered around the dam and perched on the steep hillsides were dwellings of workmen; primitive, most of them made of calico, cement bags and some even had walls of clay. Altogether about 500 men were engaged on the project, but mainly 35 were there at any one time.

Ron Johansen OAM – Tales of Our Times

### 1936: Boat Harbour Scheme

Due to problems with the Mount Warning Dam, the Boat Harbour Scheme was developed.

- Pump Station at Boat Harbour to extract water from the Rous River.

### 1960: Bray Park Scheme

This was the first Tweed District Scheme, which saw the end of the lower Tweed area’s need to draw water from the Gold Coast.

- Booster Pump Station on the corner of Rous and Waterloo Streets to pump water to the Hospital Hill Reservoir.

- Bray Park Weir with a usable volume of 640 ML.

- Bray Park River intake and Pumping Station 1 (17 ML/day capacity).

- Pumping Station 2 (17 ML/day capacity) and a Chlorine dosing station.

- Reservoirs at Razorback, Banora Point, Kingscliff and an additional 9 ML Reservoir at Hospital Hill, Murwillumbah.

- Reticulation (provision of town water) to Tweed Heads South and Kingscliff.

Tweed Shire population: 22,500
People connected to town water supply: 8,300

### 1965 – 1967: Three separate smaller water treatment plants constructed at Uki, Tyalgum and Burringbar to service each of these areas.
1963: Bray Park Water Treatment Plant
The original stage of the Bray Park Water Treatment Plant was completed.
- Horizontal sedimentation tanks.
- Multi-media filtration - sand and gravel.
- Chemical dosing with Alum Powder, Soda Ash and Chlorine Gas.
- 20 ML/day capacity.

1970: Extension of the Bray Park Scheme
to Pottsville, Stotts Creek, Cudgen and Terranora Road.

1972 – 1979: Exploring options for augmentation
Reports and studies recommended the construction of Clarrie Hall Dam. Other sites considered at the time included two separate sites on Doon Doon Creek and sites at Byrill Creek, Rockey Cutting on the Oxley River and the Tweed River at Terragon.

1977: Upgrades to meet demand
Water Pump Station 1 and 2 were upgraded to an increased capacity of 22 ML/day and 31 ML/day respectively.

Tweed Shire population: 28,750
People connected to town water supply: 20,557

The rapid and continuing growth of the Tweed area accentuated the demand for the augmentation of the Tweed Scheme to meet the region’s immediate and future water supply, so in 1979 Tweed Shire Council in conjunction with the Department of Public Works agreed on a programme of works, which would provide an assured and high quality water supply past the year 2000.

The $29 million project including the construction of the Clarrie Hall Dam, set the scene for a restriction-free water supply for the Tweed for many years to come. The program also included the augmentation of the Bray Park treatment works and the construction of additional reservoirs, pumping stations and trunk mains to maintain the increasing demand of water to the shire. The water update scheme for the Tweed Shire was one of the biggest and most extensive carried out by a NSW country council. Work started on the dam site in 1980 and the dam was opened in August 1983.

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1983: Clarrie Hall Dam
- Usable capacity of 15,000 ML.
- Catchment area of 60 km².

Tweed Shire population: 40,000
People connected to town water supply: 32,000

Laying cement for Clarrie Hall Dam Wall Murwillumbah Historical Society

Construction of Clarrie Hall Dam Spillway

Construction of tunnel for Clarrie Hall Dam
1983: Bray Park Water Treatment Plant upgrade

- Bray Park Water Treatment Plant and Water Pump Station 1 were upgraded to 60 ML/day and 65 ML/day respectively.
- Filters were upgraded to multi-media filters with layers of sand, gravel and anthracite.
- A 30 ML/day upflow clarifier was constructed.

In the Mid 80s Council commenced the purchase of land for a future dam site at Byrill Creek (a tributary of the Tweed River west of Murwillumbah), which would be similar in size to Clarrie Hall Dam. During 2009, approximately 65 per cent of the land was under Council Tenure. Much of this is hardwood plantations, a joint venture between Council and NSW State Forests.

1985 – 1989:

- A new 1.6ML clear water storage was provided at the Water Treatment Plant.
- Water Pump Station 2 was upgraded to 75 ML/day.
- Water Pump Station 1A was constructed with an initial capacity of 80 ML/day.

1998: Burringbar Water Treatment Plant ceased operation and the town was connected to the Bray Park Water Treatment supply.

2004 – 2006:

- A new 5 ML clear water reservoir was constructed for the Water Treatment plant.
- Water Pump Station 2 was replaced by a larger pump station that could be upgraded to 160 ML/day.
- The Tweed’s population at this time was 79,321 with approximately 88 per cent of people connected to the town water supply.

2010: Bray Park Water Treatment Plant upgrade to Membrane Ultrafiltration technology

- Commissioned in April 2010.
- Membrane Ultrafiltration technology.
- Capacity to treat up to 100 ML/day with infrastructure to expand to 150 ML/day.
- In 2010 extraction from the Tweed River is approximately 9,500 to 10,000 ML per year.

During it’s construction, the unusual dry weather had enabled work to continue almost without a break – but two months before the dam was to be officially opened down came the rain and the dam had the distinction of being full before it was officially opened.

The dam was officially opened by Deputy Premier and Minister for Public Works, Jack Ferguson on 19 August 1984.

It was named after the late Clarrie Hall, one of the Tweed’s outstanding citizens and for many terms, President of Tweed Shire Council. — Ron Johansen OAM – Tales of Our Times

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