**Essays on Mount Crosby - The Great Engines**

In 1892 the great pump engines of Mount Crosby, whose job it was to pump "clean" water from the upper Brisbane River to the growing metropolis, were the toast of town. They were mentioned widely in engineering journals, and high were the expectations they would put an end to water shortages in the city.

Reflecting the public interest, a lot of column inches were written describing the works at Mount Crosby and how the Brisbane River Scheme would work. Surprising then, that despite the endless inches, no description of the engines seemed to exist to allow a modern person to form an accurate idea of how they worked. Certainly that columnists made it clear that they were enormous (over ten metres tall), and they were made by the famous English firm Easton & Anderson, but as for how they worked we had only that they were "compound direct acting steam engines" and a lonely lithograph appearing to show one of the engines in a partial state of construction.

The lithograph only made things harder, for it showed that the engines were not of a common type, and since the engines had ceased operating and been replaced nearly a century ago, there was no-one to ask what they looked like. But there were plans from when the engines were installed that described every detail of the engines, and those plans had been passed from company to company responsible for water supply until they werelong forgotten (but no less beautiful in their handcrafted lines). In them lay the truth about what the unimaginable engines looked like, and they were rediscovered and shown to me just this year by a man who works for Seqwater and is too shy for me to name (but let's say he is a good and interested bloke).

I showed those plans, all two dimensional and hard to follow, to Doug Sutherland (yes, the same) and he thought he could create a 3-Dimensional animation that would help explain how they worked. Which Doug did, and to the enjoyment and edification of all it was shown at the Mount Crosby pumping station lantern show held in May and again recently - the first time in ninety years that anyone had seen how the old engines looked and worked.

If you ever wondered what put Mount Crosby on the map, or if there is curiosity in your nature, I recommend a look at Doug's animation:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=vgFdkXJu3qY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vgFdkXJu3qY)

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