**Essays on Mount Crosby - Mount Crosby Pumps**

When the Mount Crosby pumping station was built in 1890-92, it was designed to pump nine million gallons of water per day (41 ML/day) to a new reservoir high on the side of Mount Crosby. From there the water flowed, as it does today, under force of gravity all the way to Brisbane.

There were doubts at the outset whether the Brisbane River could reliably provide that amount water every day, as illustrated by this fragment of a report to the Premier by consulting engineer Davidson in 1889:

*I have been unable to procure any gaugings of the volume of the river, but although it sometimes gives off vast floods … it diminishes in dry seasons to a comparatively insignificant stream, and in some places disappears in the shingle bed to emerge again lower down with a current. This theory has been urged on me by old residents, [and] from such inquiries as I have made I am obliged to doubt its at all times yielding 12,000,000 gallons per day*

From those early days until the mid-1980s, the pumping station was the subject of almost continuous improvement and expansion, and eventually it had the capacity to pump an amazing 1000 megalitres (one million tonnes) of water per day to the Low Level treatment plant high on the side of Mount Crosby (which it really wouldn't do because the treatment plant couldn't treat that much).

While we've heard it said that all roads lead to Rome (because they started saying it in the 12th century), for much of the 20th century Queenslanders could say "all pipes lead to Mount Crosby".

Things began to change in the 1970s when the Brisbane City Council built North Pine Dam at Samsonvale to supply the expanding northern suburbs, but in 1985 they returned to Mount Crosby to build the Westbank Water Treatment Plant. Both new supplies reduced demand on Mount Crosby's old pumping station, but even today it pumps about 300 ML per day, and when combined with the normal daily output from Westbank, it means Mount Crosby delivers about 500 thousand tonnes of water to Brisbane, Ipswich and surrounding areas every day.

And that, in part, helps to explain why our school has a tap on its badge.

Col Hester