



Hospital Hill Walk

This easy informative walk supports Roma's claim that Hospital Hill is the Cradle of Australia's Oil and Gas Industry. A series of clearly recognisable concrete markers and street-corner signs direct the visitor to the various locations associated with the search for and discovery of natural gas and oil in Roma, during the period 1900 to 1930.

The Hospital Hill Walk commences at the Roma Town Council's water supply depot in Whip Street. A conspicuous shelter with information panels, standing adjacent to a pair of miniature drilling rigs, marks the entry point to the facility. From the shelter the visitor walks to the base of the obvious concrete water tower, to the site of QG1, the Government's first attempt to locate artesian water on the Hill.

Because that well produced an inadequate supply of artesian water a second well called QG2 was drilled nearby. During work on this well in 1900, natural gas was struck which was Australia's first significant indication that oil might be found.

In 1906, the gas from QG2 was reticulated to Roma for their town lighting. This venture failed after two weeks when the gas supply cut out.

In 1908, during the drilling of QG3, gas was encountered and was set alight by the wood-burning steam boiler of the rig. This blaze was eventually extinguished with an ingenious iron tank, suspended over the well and lowered from steel cables.

Following of from the State Government's removal of restrictions on private enterprise drilling for oil in the immediate Roma district, the Roma Oil Corporation drilled three wells on Hospital Hill. Very significant flows of oil and gas are located, and the company erected an absorption plant on Hospital Hill which manufactured petrol from oil and also condensate was produced.

The success on Hospital Hill brought about the formation of several oil exploration companies which operated about the district, mainly north of the town.

The oil and the "wet" gas ceased flowing from Hospital Hill wells by 1931 and no commercial oil flows resulted from the intense drilling activities elsewhere in the immediate Roma district. However the presence of gas was established and when drilling was recommended in the early 50's based on more refined geophysical surveys it became evident that natural gas rather than actual oil was the district's valuable resource. In 1969, a natural gas pipeline opened from Wallumbilla to Brisbane, and that facility presently continues to supply Brisbane with a branch line running to Gladstone.

This self-guided walking tour of Hospital Hill leads easily from one significant location to another, each site having a very legible plaque with graphics explaining just how that site fits into Roma's and Australia's heady days of initial oil exploration.

**For a detailed map and colour brochure contact the
Roma Visitor Information Centre on freecall 1800 222 399.**