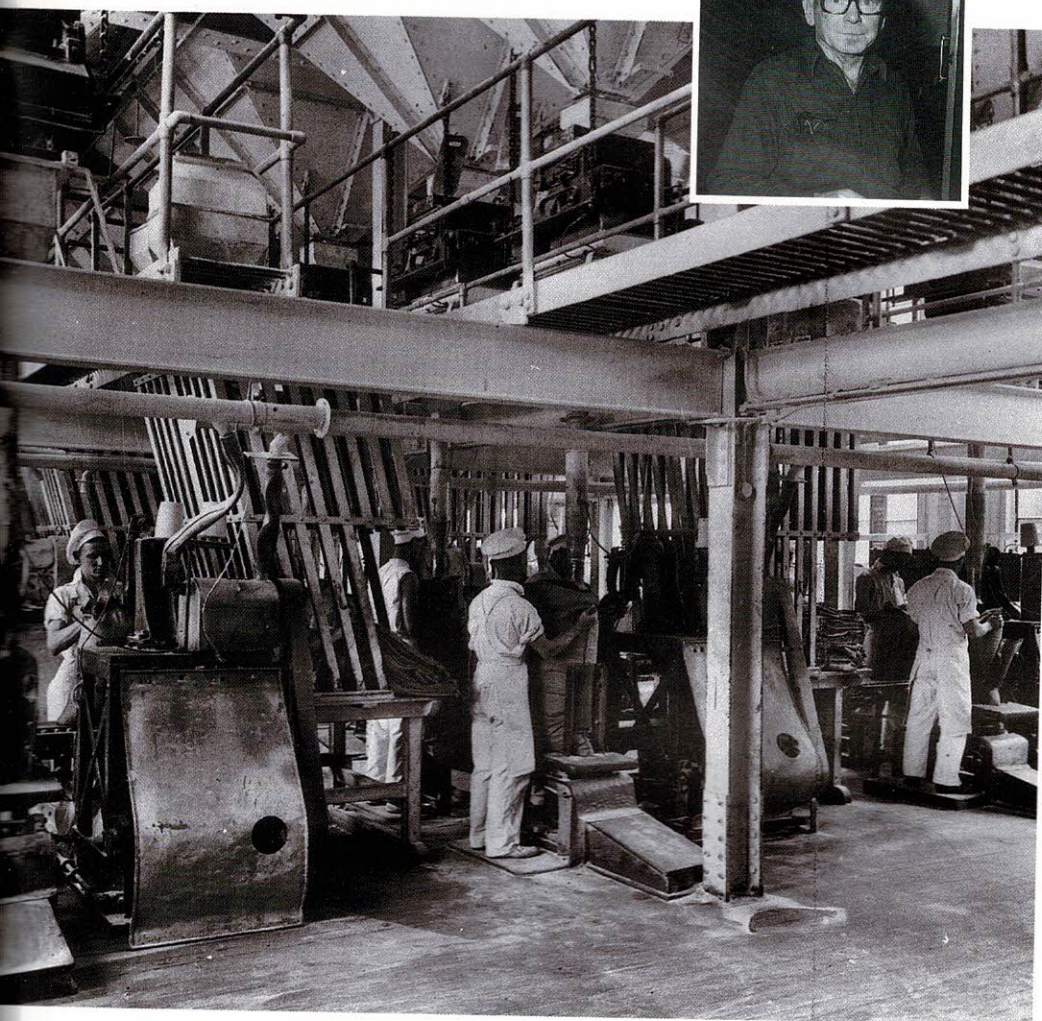


They also recalled a time "between bosses" when one of their co-workers stuck a fishing line out the window in the boss's office. Nuts-and-bolts were attached to the line to raise the alarm whenever a fish was snagged.

Shirley and Lyn had the same co-worker convinced the storeroom was haunted by the ghost of someone who had died



from a heart attack. A strange echoing noise on the second level lent credence to their story, but they eventually had to admit it was all a hoax.

In more recent times, the road leading down to Wharf 25 became a popular location for film crews, shooting scenes for advertisements and period dramas - a big distraction for the people trying to work nearby.

Some of the refinery's funniest stories revolve around the amount of drinking

1978: The refinery receives the NSW Minister for the Environment's Pollution Abatement award for the 'most effective and innovative proposal to control pollution in NSW'.

1978: The refinery celebrates its centenary. To mark the occasion, six Australian photographers are commissioned to capture the refinery's daily operations on film for an exhibition which is shown first at the factory and later at the Australian Centre for Photography Gallery.



1978: A Safety and Welfare Committee is formed, with each member representing an area of activity in the refinery.

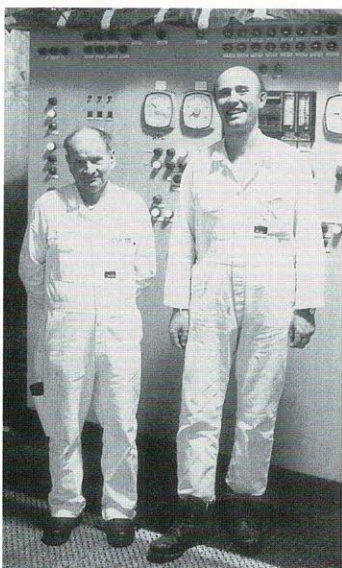
Photo shows the 1991 Statutory Safety Committee accepting an NSCA Award of Merit. Members include (L to R) Barry Williams, Leona Kieran, Vince Rossello, Jamie Sullivan, Allen Scott, John Smith (chairman), Brian Nichols, Neville Woodward (NSCA) and Fred Tonkin.

1978: The crane jibs are extended by three metres to accommodate larger sugar ships.



1984: Pyrmont is one of five CSR operations sponsoring Young Achievement project teams. The scheme encourages school-age people to go into business for themselves. Sponsor-ship continues to 1991.

Below **Carlos Martino and Tasuli Gango at the Boilout Station control panel**



which used to occur, with a few workers involved in producing "Bull Rum".

This concoction is created by boiling water in the empty rum casks from the nearby distillery. The heat draws the rum out of the wood.

One person preferred to go direct to the source, lowering a bottle on the end of a piece of string into one of the giant rum vats.

One time his string caught on the giant stirring mechanism, threatening to drag him in. Fortunately, he was able to free himself in time.

His co-workers speculated that if he had fallen into the vat he either would have drank his way out or died "without feeling any pain".

The same man was employed as a light bulb changer and would often be seen walking around with his head down. He didn't look up because if he saw a blown light bulb he would have to stop to change it.



Above **Wally Lialin (centre) at the lathe, with Allan McLaughlin (L) and Joe Matijasko**

Middle **Maintenance staff (L to R) Gaya Prasad, Rocco Ferraro, Wally Lialin, Joe Matijasko, Steve Petousis, Michael Borg and Ian Lewins**

Allan McLaughlin, the Power and Stevedoring Engineer, came to the Refinery in 1971, starting as a shift fitter and working his way up to the demanding task of looking after the power and boiler stations.

"The factory ran itself," Allan said. "It was a large wheel which had its own momentum. All you had to do was make sure you didn't lie in front of it.

"Pyrmont was like one of the family - like an old family car - a special piece of machinery. Most people believed it belonged to them - not CSR - it was ours."

The Refinery had always drawn on its own power supply - three Babcock & Wilcox water tube boilers installed in the 1940s and

'50s and three Brown Boveri turbo-alternators supplying the electrical power requirements of the three major factories.

Allan was Emergency Controller for seven years and the last president of the social club.

"Pymont probably had the best social club ever created. We organised theatre parties, harbour cruises, picnics and many other events," Allan said.

Allan Burton could recall when talented employees would take part in regular Friday lunchtime concerts in the auditorium.

A lending library was operating on-site up until about 1975, there was a tennis court and a fierce volleyball competition between the work gangs.

1985: The largest sugar cargo received at Pymont is 28,000 tonnes, shipped in the MV Howard Smith.



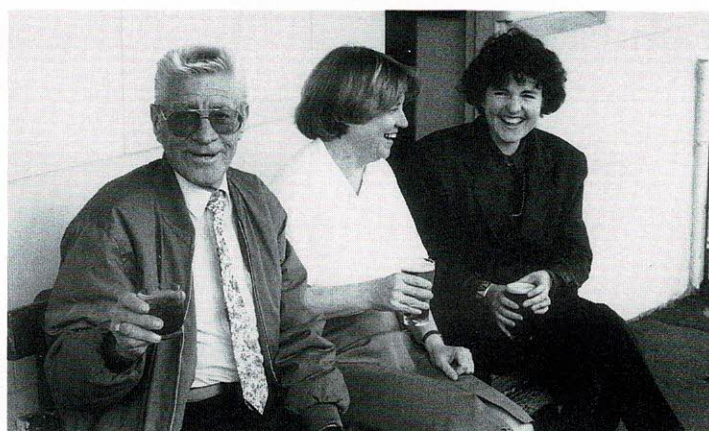
Above The reading room

Far right top *Sugar industry technologists visited Pymont in 1987*

Far right bottom
Process services team members including Stephen Siklos, David Sivarman, Edilfonso Nunez, Zoran Farkas, De Wen Luo and Luis Ocares

Below left *Volleyball was a popular pastime, and fiercely contested*

Below right
Ray O'Brien, Julie Fox and Libby Moore relax with a quiet drink



Above *Warehouse activity pauses for a photo during the last days (L to R). Chris Pananos, Norm Andrews, Mario Quintal, Peter Tzortzis, Douglas Clarke, Brian Nichols and Mario Angelucci*

Sport played a major part in the lives of many of the Refinery workers, with several playing in the first grade rugby league and union teams. Neil Whittaker, for example, was captain of Balmain's 1st grade rugby league team.

Another fine athlete was Neil Walker, who represented Australia in karate. He was five foot nothing, but no one would dare pick on him.

Glen Capelin, the Personnel Services Supervisor, started with CSR 20 years ago after a chat in the local pub.

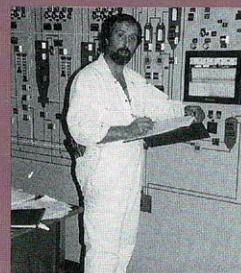
"I was talking to the CSR personnel officer in the pub and he invited me to apply for the position of pay clerk. He interviewed me on the Monday and I started on the Tuesday," Glen said.

CSR had been a leader in caring for its employees, according to Glen, offering wages and conditions generally better than average.

"It was the greatest place on earth to work. Everyone was treated very well. We had excellent management. We all thought the same way and everyone was treated fairly."

Brian Nichols, the Refinery's last Operations Manager, agreed.

"CSR treats people well," Brian said. "In return CSR has benefited from the skills and dedication of its many loyal employees. The respect, friendship and help I received from the people at Pymont had been a source of strength in my role as Manager."



1986: Stage 2 of the granular activated carbon plant is commissioned. The plant consists of eight stainless adsorber columns each containing 35 tonnes of granular-activated carbon. A multiple hearth kiln reactivates the carbon. This plant replaces the old, dirty and labour intensive char end.

Photo shows Frank Alonti at the Carbon Plant control panel.



1986: A Bailey's Network 90 process control computer is installed to control the 'wet end' (front half) of the factory. A DEC mini computer provides overall factory information to assist in supervisory control.

Photo shows Cemal Mustafa at the Network 90 control system, being watched by Domenic Melacrinis.

It was perhaps fitting that the refinery's last manager was someone who started his career with CSR at Pymont 21 years ago.

Brian was staying at the nearby CSR Hostel for students at the time, studying science part-time. In his second year, he worked in the Pymont Laboratory.

Far right top *Part of the 1984 Greening of Sydney Award garden*

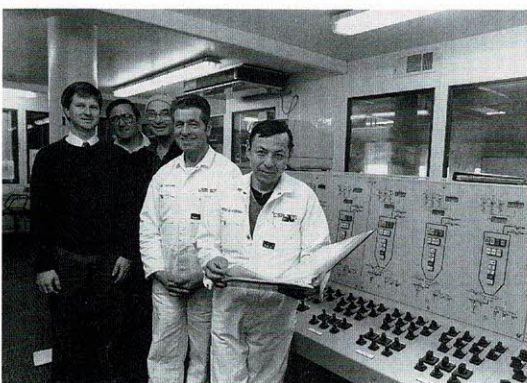
Far right bottom

Pictured leaving in July 1992 after the Hessers shut down are (back, L to R) Kwang Lim, Jimmy Foundas, Miro Nizic, Mark Dunn, Jose Castro, Ray Villavicencio, Cong Luu, Peter Vardouniotis and Nghia Luu. (front) Joe Rizk

Right

1992 Forklift training class including (back, L to R) Miodrag Bozic, Du Thanh La, Ruben Barraga, John Hodge (forklift instructor), Hilton Rohe, Eddy Dvorak, Ranko Jakovljevic, Luis Ocares and Paul Brown (front) Sammy Kazzi, Manuel Magtanong and Paul Valek

Below *Tony Bitar*



Above *Pictured in the Carbon plant control room are (L to R) Rob Stobie, Tony Harris, Denis Maile, Salvatore Tropiano and Sergio Calahorrano*

The laboratory was involved in analytical work for the control of the process and quality of the products.

Brian's work for CSR took him to Brisbane and Melbourne before returning to Pymont as Technical Services Superintendent in

1985. He was promoted to Production Manager a year later, a position he held until becoming Operations Manager in 1990.

Commercial officer Maree Ross has seen a lot of changes in her 18 years with the company, starting as a copy typist and later coming to grips with an on-line computer system.

"I'm involved in accounts payable and all that's connected with it, so there's no secrets from me," Maree jokes.

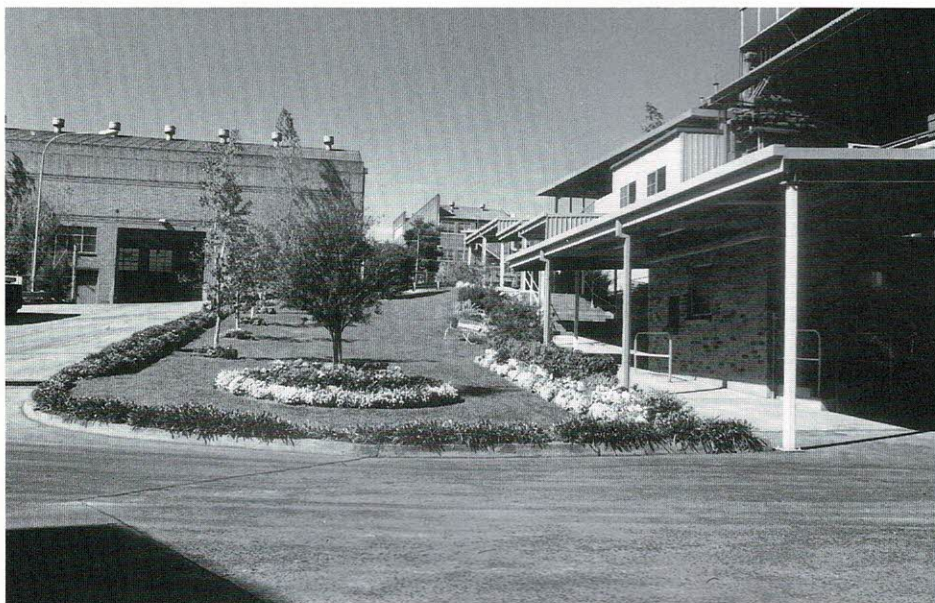
She is one of the few required to help run the Pymont Depot since the refinery's closure.

While the running of a refinery like Pymont was a team effort over the years, a few "quiet achievers" had been the backbone of the operation.

People like Tony Bitar, a sugar boiler for 10 years, who was respected for his uncanny knack of controlling the balance between steam and water to achieve the right-sized sugar crystal.

But even with the advent of modern technology, things occasionally went wrong.

Rob Stobie, the Acting Production Superintendent who was at Pymont for five years, recalled a time in 1988 when the Refinery was known as "Lake Pymont".



"There was a problem in the boil-out area and syrup overflowed from every tank, creating a

great, sticky mess. We were wading knee-deep in syrup for about four weeks," Rob said.

While the workforce at Pymont represented many different ethnic backgrounds, it was united by a faith in the refinery's family spirit and its loyalty to CSR.

Most understood the reasons behind the decision to close the Refinery, although it was difficult for them to imagine a time when the place they had grown to love was no longer there.

For many, even among those who no longer work at Pymont, it was truly like losing a member of the family.



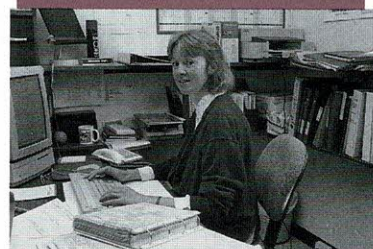
1987: A Larox automatic horizontal frame pressure filter is installed to replace the existing Sweetland mud filter. Carbonatation mud (about 2500 tonnes a year) is now disposed as a solid to a landfill tip instead of as a liquid slurry to the sewer.

Photo shows (L to R) John Lazopoulos, Denis Maile, Doug Glisovic, John Taylor, Salvatore Tropiano and Sergio Calahorrano at the Larox Filter

1987: The Sugar Industry Technologists Inc holds only its second technical symposia outside North America in Sydney; the event includes a tour of the refinery.

1989: The sugar industry in Australia is deregulated, sounding the death knell for Pymont Refinery.

1990: A system is installed to provide one-kilolitre intermediate liquid bulk containers in response to a market need.



1990: Pymont plays a leading role in producing a Quality Systems manual for maintaining a consistently high standard of quality at all refineries.

Photo shows Quality Services Manager Michelle Duff updating the Quality Systems manual

THE SUGAR HOUSE CLOSES

When the Pymont Refinery closed in October, 1992, many of the 270 employees accepted redundancy packages offered by the company, while a few were able to take up alternative positions within CSR around Australia.

It was a sad occasion; no one wanted the Refinery to close. The employees enjoyed working at Pymont and some found it difficult

to understand how deregulation of the sugar industry had led to the closure.

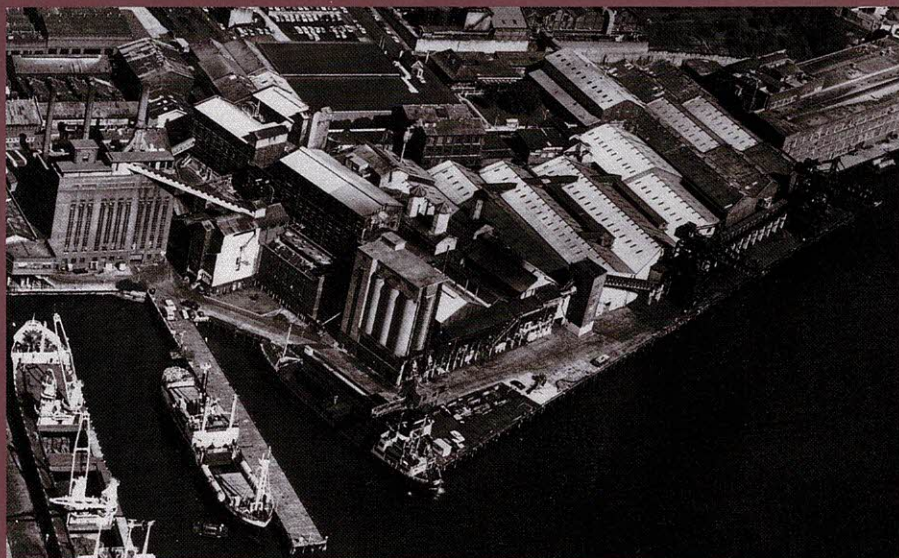
For most it was like losing part of the family. Even those who had been working at Pymont for only a few years had grown to enjoy the stable working environment and the rewards for those who showed initiative.

One of the comments generally shared by employees was that everyone was given the



Above **Ross MacDonald** receives instruction from **Sophie Harris** of **PWU** on job seeking

Right **Pymont** from the air



Far right **Cube sugar production** will remain at **Pymont**. Pictured are (L to R) **Sammy Danso**, **David Singh**, **Ica Valajcovska**, **Jeanette Mirabito**, **Zira Leshevic**, **Nella Deprato**, **Robert Barnett**, **Joe Frade** and **Jack Righetti** watching cube packing during the final days of **Refinery operation**

chance to improve their position. A wide range of training was provided and for those with ambition, the opportunities were wide-ranging. Through the years many apprentices went on to become engineers, while many unskilled workers went on to take more senior roles as foremen and shift supervisors following in-house training.

Many employees had been long-serving and had worked since the days when there were over 1200 people working on-site. Automation and changing work practices reduced the workforce over three decades, but the strong character within Pymont remained.

Loyalty, respect, pride, sadness, disappointment, friendship - all were words used by those working at Pymont before the closure.

The multicultural nature of the workforce was an outstanding feature, with over 40 different nationalities working at Pymont at any time. It was a credit to all that the spirit of co-operation and respect for each other's cultural background had kept any conflict to a minimum.

The inner city location resulted in many migrants taking up jobs at Pymont and a sign of the loyalty which they brought was reflected in the number of their next generation who gained jobs at the Refinery.

In the final years, a sign of this loyalty was the commitment among employees to keep the plant running well and efficiently up to its close.

Respect and friendship were never more evident than within the department teams and shifts. Strong and lasting friendships were made among people who relied on each other to keep their section operating well and where teamwork was critical in the safety of every employee.

During the last year, the company actively worked to provide financial planning advice for employees and assist them in preparing for other jobs.

For many, they had hoped that their job at Pymont would be for life. Unfortunately, this was not to be and the end of an era has now come.

In the immediate future, CSR will retain a presence on the site. A refined products distribution



1990: The refinery forms a consultative committee comprising 15 people drawn from management, supervisory and employee ranks. The committee provides a forum where issues relating to factory operation and implementation of Award Restructuring can be discussed and resolved.

Photo shows Consultative committee members (L to R) Fred Tonkin, Julie Fox and Sergio Calahorrano discuss redundancy packages.

September 22, 1992: The last raw sugar is taken from 13 Bond for melting.

September 25, 1992:

'Steam is off the house' for the last time. The Pymont Refinery is shut down ending a chapter in CSR's long history in the sugar industry.

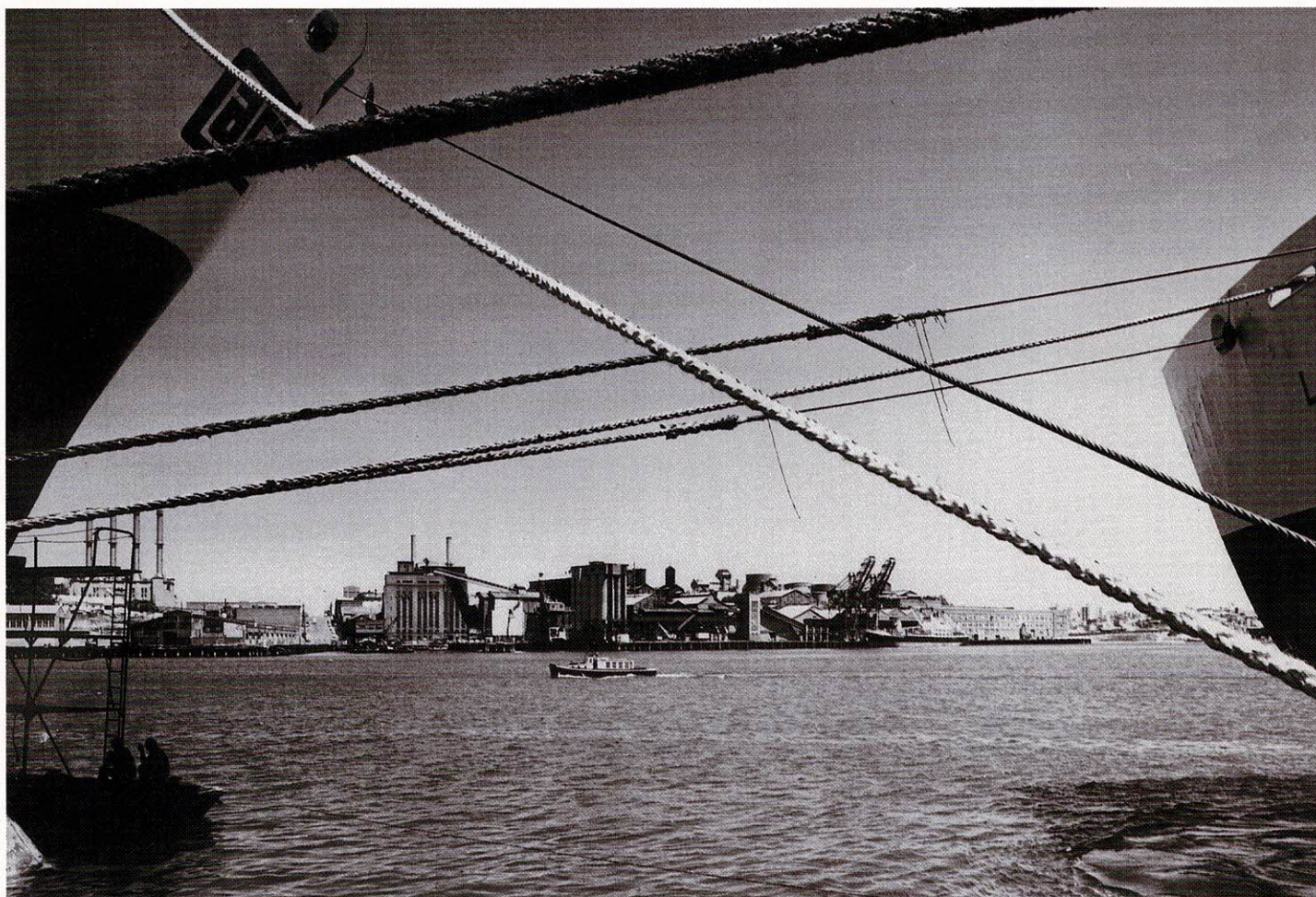
October 16, 1992:

Approximately 300 employees and past employees gather at Wentworth Park, Glebe for a special dinner to commemorate the closure of CSR's Pymont Refinery.



centre and McCaffery's Transport will continue until the land is required for redevelopment. CSR sugar cubes and also liquid sugar will continue to be produced on-site as well.

The long term future for the Pymont Refinery site will be in residential redevelopment - a role which will bring more people into the heart of Sydney. But nothing can change the important role the Refinery has played in CSR's history and in the lives of the many thousands of people who worked there.



It provided the wages for these people but, more importantly, provided the means for them to raise families, participate in the community and play their part in Australia's growth for more than a hundred years.

Above ***Pymont Refinery from the harbour. This photo was taken by Max Dupain, widely regarded as one of Australia's greatest photographers. Dupain, who died in 1992, was commissioned on several occasions to document the Refinery.***

This book is the result of the efforts of the Pyrmont Refinery Historical Committee, comprising Bob Barnett, Allan Burton, Tony Harris, Frank Righetti and Brian Nichols. The Committee was well-supported by the management of CSR Limited, with both funds and moral support.

We also pay tribute to the current and former CSR employees who enriched this book with their photographs and memories. The Noel Butlin Archives Centre of the Australian National University provided the wonderful historical photographs, while BHP Engineering provided the aerial photo on the cover. The final photographs of employees were taken by David Schama and Ralph Lindsey.

This book was written, designed and produced by Michels Warren Pty Ltd. Our final acknowledgement goes to Pyrmont Refinery and its people for 114 years of fantastic memories.



**Refined
Sugars**





Refined Sugars

Dave
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might like a copy of
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Please find attached a copy of THE SUGAR HOUSE, CSR Pymont Refinery 1878 - 1992.

A booklet such as this would not have been possible without the support and efforts of a large group of people who contributed to the stories, photographs, and production. Their efforts, together with the financial contribution of CSR, have resulted in a booklet of which they can all be justifiably proud. I thank all who contributed in any way.

I hope you enjoy reading The Sugar House, and that it refreshes some fond memories you have of Pymont Refinery.

Kind Regards,

JBNichols

Brian Nichols.