

COOPERAGE

Date Built: 1901 (rebuilt 2006)

Architect: Howard Tanner

Interior design: Form Follows Function

The CSR site for the manufacture of barrels for rum. A cooper is a person who makes or repairs barrels.



When the Pymont estate was subdivided, the Chowne shipyards were set up in 1840, followed by iron foundries and tin smiths. The land now occupied by Cadi Park was flattened, leaving the Cooperage site as an escarpment. From the Cooperage site, passers-by would observe the City Iron Works burning coal and creating steel.

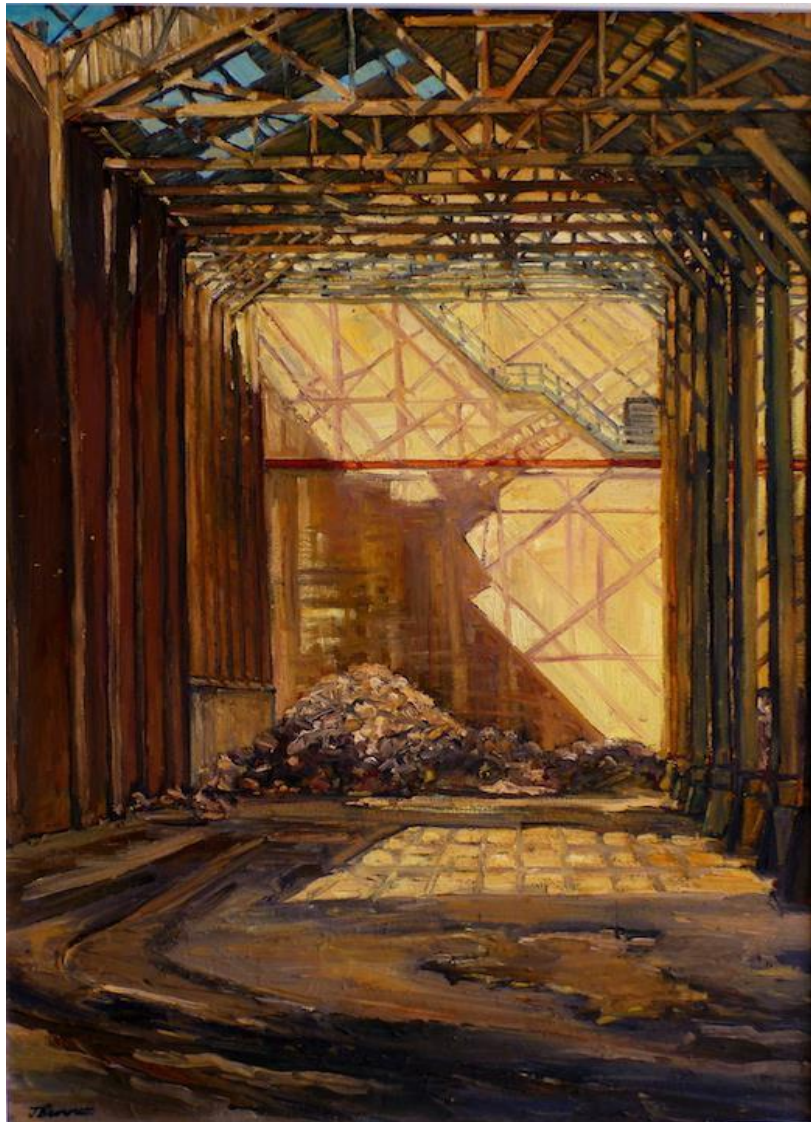


THE CITY IRON WORKS, PLYMOUTH. SEE PAGE 17.

In 1901 CSR closed its distillery in Fiji and replaced it with a much larger facility in Pymont. Rum was one of the distillery's products, and it had to be stored in barrels. The original Cooperage building was therefore built for CSR as a specialist workshop to manufacture these barrels. They were then conveyed on steel tracks over a bridge across Bowman Street to the distillery. (Until the 1980s Bowman Street was much narrower than today.)









In 1984, as industries quit Pymont, the State government resolved to redevelop the area, and in 1987 decided that the peninsula needed its own plan. In the same year CSR asked Lend Lease to study the feasibility of redeveloping the whole industrial site.

Pymont residents were deeply divided: some were forced to leave the area, others welcomed development, but in 1979 opponents formed UPROAR (Ultimo Pymont Residents Opposed to Arbitrary Redevelopment) and endured years of being consulted (or, in their view, coerced). In August 1992 a few activists proclaimed the Republic of Pymont. In this brilliant but ultimately vain gesture the republicans issued visas, and publicised their critique of top-down planning, and in particular to Jacksons Landing, and the proposed casino and helipad.

Meanwhile in 1997 Lend Lease bought the CSR site, and by April 1999 Jacksons Landing was under construction. The Cooperage was one of a few buildings scheduled for preservation and adaptive re-use. In 2006 the building was redeveloped into executive commercial suites. The building's exterior was redesigned and developed by W Property and Orwell and Peter Phillips.

The structure is intact, and displays significant pieces of barrel-making machinery, including the large bandsaw that cut wooden staves into precise shapes. The staves were fitted together and bound with iron hoops to form barrels. A viewing gallery around the barrel hoist in the foyer shows how the barrels were moved between floors, and a great whetstone survives, to show how the craftsmen sharpened their saws, hoop drivers, adzes and chisels. The Cooperage building today contains a café and small businesses.