

The Pymont Destructor

For many years, rubbish was carried out to sea in punts, or simply burned. In 1910 these crude methods were supplemented by a “destructor” near the Glebe Island Bridge and Blackwattle Bay. Refuse was to be burned so thoroughly that it would produce “a fine, hard, vitrious clinker from any combustible or innocuous matter” (*Evening News* 12 July 1909.) This installation would serve all of western Sydney and replace the existing destructor at Moore Park.

So economical was the destructor that councillors were reluctant to replace it in 1933. Sydney Ferries offered to punt refuse out to sea, saving the cost of £40,000 for the Burley Griffin incinerator, plus running costs. There was no evidence – some argued – that rubbish would drift back to the beaches. Others thought such expenditure was immoral. Surely “a plain brick building would suffice for Pymont. Not more than £10,000 should be spent on a building in that locality.” (*Sydney Morning Herald* 1 October 1933)

The old destructor survived alongside the new Incinerator until both were demolished.