

# Maritime Heritage at Risk Program

Annual Report: 2019/20



## Acknowledgment

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

We are committed to genuinely partner, and meaningfully engage, with Victoria's Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations in the 21st century and beyond.



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**There are about 324 shipwrecks which have been found in Victoria with many threatened by environmental and human interference. Heritage Victoria’s Maritime Heritage at Risk Program aims to identify and protect the most important shipwrecks at the highest risk.**

In November 2016 Heritage Victoria commenced a program designed to identify and prioritise the State’s most significant shipwrecks; provide an assessment of their current and future risk and implement a site management program to better safeguard them.

The Maritime Heritage at Risk Program also includes a Shipwreck Risk Register, through which site management activities for protecting those wrecks is initiated. The wrecks in the Register are pro-actively managed with the aim of minimising further deterioration to the site, this includes regular monitoring and the capture of on-site data on the condition of the wreck to facilitate the development of risk management programs.

The 2019/20 Annual Report includes two new wrecks on the Register (bringing the total to 25), details of a major maritime archaeology project and the extension of monitoring activities to deep-water wreck sites.

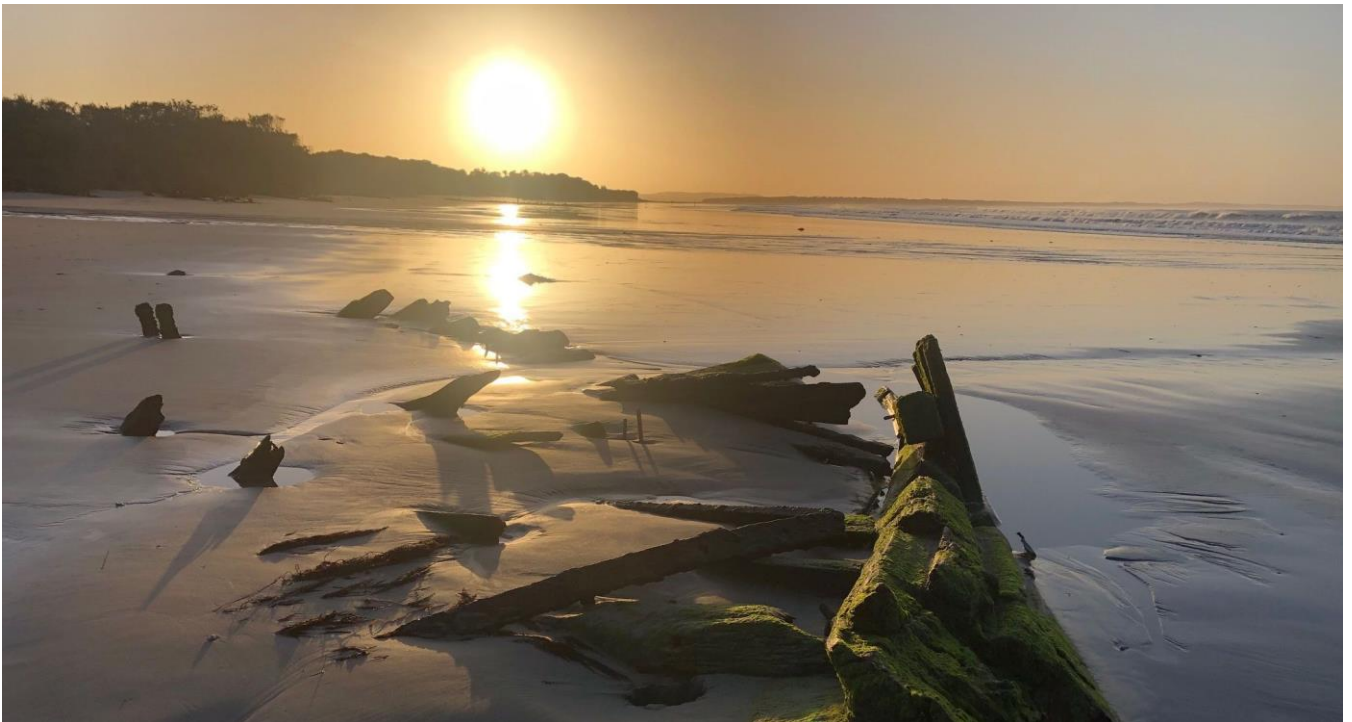


Photo: *Amazon* wreck; Warren Cook, Inverloch Surf Life Saving Club.

## KEY ACTIVITIES: 2019/20

The key activities conducted in 2019/20 were:

<b>Fieldwork</b>	<i>Barbara</i>	
<b>Conservation</b>	<i>Amazon</i>	<i>S.S City of Launceston</i>
	<i>Clarence</i>	<i>S.S City of Launceston</i>
	<i>William Salthouse</i>	<i>P.S Thistle</i>
<b>Wreck Monitoring</b>	<i>Alert</i>	<i>S.S Glenelg</i>
	<i>Joanna</i>	<i>Cheviot</i>
	<i>Mountain Maid</i>	<i>S.S Cambridge</i>
	<i>S.S Conside</i>	<i>S.S Queensland</i>
	<i>Coogee</i>	<i>Amazon</i>
<b>Port Monitoring</b>	Port Albert	Port Welshpool
<b>Inspections</b>	<i>Barbara</i>	<i>S.S Glenelg</i>
	<i>Cheviot</i>	<i>P.S Thistle</i>

## SHIPWRECK RISK REGISTER CHANGES: 2019/20

During the year an assessment was made of five wrecks for inclusion in the Shipwreck Risk Register. These were new or existing wrecks where significant new information became available. Consequently, two additional wrecks, the *Barbara* and *Lady Mary Pelham* were included in the 2019/20 Register.

### FIELDWORK: *Barbara* Wreck Site

In February 2020 Heritage Victoria in partnership with Flinders University's Maritime Archaeology Department and the Maritime Archaeology Association of Victoria conducted a field school at the *Barbara* wreck site. The *Barbara* was built in Tasmania in 1841, used as a lime trader in Port Phillip Bay and sank in 1852 at Rye, Victoria. The wreck is a rare example of early Australian shipbuilding.

The fieldwork included wreck identification, surveys, excavation and underwater photogrammetry. Three small sections of the wreck were excavated, providing information on the vessel's construction. Wood samples showed that the vessel was very well constructed using a variety of timbers sourced from different Australian states.

The field school provided detailed information on an early Victorian shipwreck as well as introducing students to the techniques of underwater archaeological survey and excavation.



Photo: *Barbara* wreck; Flinders University.

## CONSERVATION

### *Amazon*

During the year, the *Amazon* shipwreck continued to undergo significant sand erosion with additional parts becoming exposed and subject to human interference. Conservation activities included collaboration with Parks Victoria to remove large sections of the wreck washed up on shore.

Inverloch Surf Life Saving Club continues to provide regular reports on the condition of the wreck. In addition, a local volunteer group (*Amazon 1863 Project*) has also monitored and increased public awareness of the site.

### *S.S City of Launceston*

Ongoing Heritage Victoria site maintenance activities (provided by Professional Diving Services) include the installation of zinc anodes to stabilise the condition of the wreck.



Photo: *Amazon* wreck; Heritage Victoria.

## WRECK MONITORING

The number of participants in the Community Shipwreck Monitoring Program increased from three to five in 2019/20. The number of wrecks monitored increased from five to 14.

The program is a partnership between Heritage Victoria and the community to monitor shipwrecks at risk of human Interference. Any damaging activities including anchoring, fishing and diving are reported by participants and investigated by Heritage Victoria.

From January to July 2020 Queenscliff, Werribee, Port Albert and Port Welshpool Volunteer Coast Guards and Inverloch Surf Life Saving Club conducted 32 site visits. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, visits were severely limited after March 2020.

The program is provided with funding from the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.



Photo: Werribee Volunteer Coast Guard vessel.

## PORT MONITORING

The increase in recreational deep diving has led to more recent reports of looting of previously undisturbed deep-water shipwrecks in Victoria and elsewhere in Australia.

To address this issue, the Community Shipwreck Monitoring Program was expanded in 2019/20 to include Port Albert and Port Welshpool Volunteer Coast Guards. As well as visiting deep-water wreck sites, participants also monitor diving vessels operating from their port facilities.

Port monitoring commenced in July 2020.

## INSPECTIONS

Four inspections and risk assessments were conducted during the year.

*S.S Glenelg* which has suffered from significant human interference was visited in July 2019. The condition of the wreck appears to be stable.

The *Barbara* was visited in conjunction with the Rye field school in February 2020. The wreck condition was relatively stable with signs of gradual deterioration.

*Cheviot* was visited in March 2020 with the wreck appearing to be in a stable condition with very little site disturbance. Some marine growth has changed since the previous inspection however, this is likely due to seasonal variations.

The visible remains of *P.S Thistle* consist of the paddle wheels, engine and large boiler tank. The wreck was visited in March 2020 when some erosion was detected exposing more components of the engine.



Photo: *S.S Glenelg*; Unknown.

## SHIPWRECK RISK REGISTER: 2019/20

The following were identified to be the most significant Victorian shipwrecks at the highest risk in 2019/20.

Priority	Shipwreck
1	<i>Amazon</i>
2	<i>P.S Clonmel*</i>
3	<i>S.S Conside</i>
4	<i>Loch Ard</i>
5	<i>Monumental City</i>
6	<i>Thistle</i>
7	<i>Barbara</i>
8	<i>Cerberus (H.M.V.S)*</i>
9	<i>Cheviot</i>
10	<i>S.S City of Launceston*</i>
11	<i>Clarence*</i>
12	<i>Nautilus</i>
13	<i>Countess of Hopetoun (H.M.V.S)</i>
14	<i>P.S Thistle</i>
15	<i>William Salthouse*</i>
16	<i>Alert*</i>
17	<i>S.S Cambridge</i>
18	<i>Carlisle</i>
19	<i>Lady Mary Pelham</i>
20	<i>M.V City of Rayville</i>
21	<i>T.S.S Coramba</i>
22	<i>S.S Glenelg*</i>
23	<i>S.S Gulf of Carpentaria</i>
24	<i>S.S Kanowna</i>
25	<i>S.S Queensland</i>

Note: (\*): Protected Zone wrecks



## OUR PARTNERS

Heritage Victoria would like to thank its partners for their contribution to the program in 2019/20.

Activity	Partner
<b>Fieldwork</b>	Flinders University. Maritime Archaeology Association of Victoria.
<b>Conservation</b>	Parks Victoria. Inverloch Surf Life Saving Club. Amazon 1863 Project. Professional Diving Services.
<b>Wreck Monitoring</b>	Queenscliff Volunteer Coast Guard (VF 9). Werribee Volunteer Coast Guard (VF 10). Port Albert Volunteer Coast Guard (VF 19). Port Welshpool Volunteer Coast Guard (VF 20). Inverloch Surf Life Saving Club.
<b>Port Monitoring</b>	Port Albert Volunteer Coast Guard (VF 19). Port Welshpool Volunteer Coast Guard (VF 20).
<b>Inspections</b>	Flinders University: <i>Barbara</i> wreck site.
<b>Funding</b>	Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

Heritage general enquiries: 03 7022 6390      Email: [heritage.victoria@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:heritage.victoria@delwp.vic.gov.au)

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