

Maritime Heritage at Risk Program

Annual Report: 2020/21



Environment,
Land, Water
and Planning

OFFICIAL

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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Many shipwrecks found in Victoria are under threat from environmental and human interference. Since 2016 Heritage Victoria's Maritime Heritage at Risk program has protected the most significant at-risk shipwrecks.

The Maritime Heritage at Risk Program conducts site management activities at the most significant Victorian shipwrecks at the highest risk. These wrecks are included in a Shipwreck Risk Register.

The wrecks on the Shipwreck Risk Register are actively managed with the aim of minimising further deterioration to the site. This includes conservation activities, community involvement in observing and reporting human activity and conducting diver site inspections. In addition, data is collected on the current condition and potential future risk to wrecks. In 2020/21 there were 25 shipwrecks on the Register.

The 2020/21 Annual Report includes information on conservation, monitoring and inspections conducted at wreck sites. Due to COVID-19 restrictions several activities were severely curtailed during the year.



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

SITE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES: 2020/21

The key site management activities conducted in 2020/21 were:

ACTIVITY	LOCATION	
Conservation	<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>
Wreck Monitoring	<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>
Port Monitoring	<i>Port Albert</i>	<i>Port Welshpool</i>
Inspections	<i>H.M.V.S Cerberus</i>	<i>S.S City of Launceston</i>
	<i>Barbara</i>	<i>S.S Glenelg</i>
	<i>William Salthouse</i>	

SHIPWRECK RISK REGISTER CHANGES: 2020/21

There were no changes to the Shipwreck Risk Register in 2020/21.

CONSERVATION

Amazon

The *Amazon* wreck continued to suffer from storm and tidal surge activity in 2020/21, resulting in significant changes in sand cover and increased wreck exposure. Wreck Creek which flows behind the sand dunes at Inverloch Surf Beach broke its banks creating a new channel changing the wreck profile with two previously unseen large sections of the hull becoming exposed.

Heritage Victoria has recorded the bow section of the wreck with photogrammetry providing a 3-dimensional digital model of the site.

Fragments of the wreck have been removed and are now temporarily stored at a purpose-built saltwater bath. The fragments will be reburied in a stable marine environment to safeguard their preservation.

Conservation activities have continued with Parks Victoria and regular monitoring on the wreck's condition has been conducted by Inverloch Surf Life Saving Club and the Amazon 1863 Project community group.



Photo: *Amazon* wreck; Heritage Victoria.

S.S City of Launceston

Continuation of conservation activities (provided by Professional Diving Services) including the installation and maintenance of zinc anodes to stabilise the condition of the wreck.

WRECK MONITORING

Five Volunteer Coast Guard flotillas and one Surf Life Saving Club participated in the Community Shipwreck Monitoring Program in 2020/21. Fourteen shipwrecks located in both State and Commonwealth waters were regularly monitored. Participants observe and report on any damaging human activity at wreck sites including anchoring, fishing and diving.



Photo: Jenny Smith, Port Albert Volunteer Coast Guard.

During 2020/21 Queenscliff, Werribee, Port Albert and Port Welshpool Volunteer Coast Guards and Inverloch Surf Life Saving Club conducted 103 site visits. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, visits were severely limited in August 2020 and May 2021.

There were several reports of vessels detected fishing in the S.S *City of Launceston* and *Clarence* Protected Zones. Reports of non-compliance are referred to Heritage Victoria's compliance team and are treated in accordance with Heritage Victoria's Compliance and Enforcement Strategy.

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

PORT MONITORING

To address recent reports of looting of previously undisturbed deep-water shipwrecks, Port Albert and Port Welshpool Volunteer Coast Guards monitor diving vessels docked or launched from boat ramps in their port facilities. There were 34 port monitoring visits conducted during 2020/21.

Both participants also monitor deep-water wreck sites in their areas.

INSPECTIONS

Seven inspections and risk assessments were conducted during 2020/21.

The **S.S City of Launceston** was visited by Heritage Victoria in January 2021 when the wreck was surveyed and photographed.

There were many fishing lines on the wreck but no damage visible.

Overall, the condition of the wreck appears to be very good and stable.

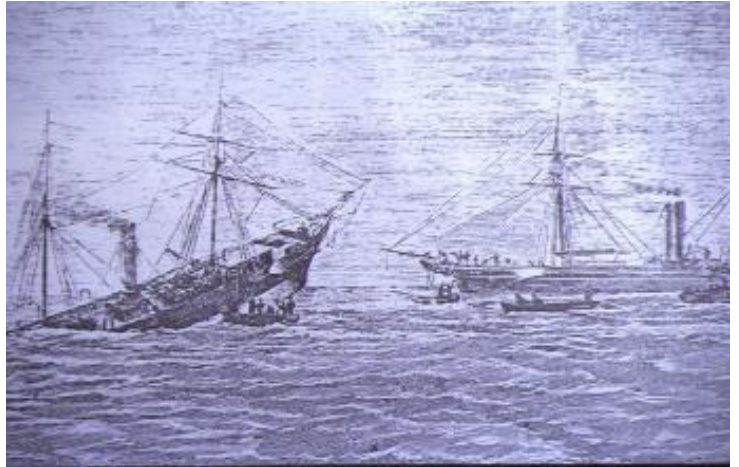


Illustration: Collision between S.S City of Launceston and S.S Penola; Illustrated Melbourne Post; 25 December 1865.



Photo: *Barbara*; Heritage Victoria

The wreck of the **Barbara** was visited by Heritage Victoria in January and April 2021. It was previously visited in conjunction with the Heritage Victoria / Flinders University field school in February 2020.

Photogrammetry and data collection was undertaken, and sand, sediment and bacteria samples collected.

There was a slight increase in sand cover and timbers exposed. However, no significant disturbance to the site was visible.

H.M.V.S *Cerberus* was visited by Hassan Lahrech in December 2020 and by Heritage Victoria in March 2021. The first visit was to identify any hazards before commencing activities for an educational photogrammetry project.

The second visit assessed the condition of the wreck.

Some sand scoring was detected around the wreck. In addition, some structural frames have collapsed with gaps enabling diver entry to appear.



Photo: H.M.V.S *Cerberus*; State Library of Victoria



Photo: S.S *Glenelg*; Steve Cartledge

S.S *Glenelg* was visited by Ian Scholey in February 2021. The site was previously visited in July 2019.

The wreck was photographed. However, it was difficult to identify any major changes since the last visit.

Overall, the wreck's condition seems to be stable with signs of ongoing deterioration.

William Salthouse was visited by Neil Walls in March 2021. A loss of sand cover was detected which is likely to be from natural erosion.

This has resulted in the uncovering of hull timbers and some previously buried artefacts, including animal bones from salted pork barrels.

The condition of the wreck is deteriorating steadily.



Photo: *William Salthouse* artefacts; Heritage Victoria

SHIPWRECK RISK REGISTER: 2020/21

The following were identified to be the most significant Victorian shipwrecks at the highest risk in 2020/21.

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 2020/21.

Activity	Partner
Conservation	Parks Victoria. Amazon 1863 Project. Professional Diving Services.
Wreck Monitoring	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.
Port Monitoring	Port Albert Volunteer Coast Guard (VF 19). Port Welshpool Volunteer Coast Guard (VF 20).
Funding	Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

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