

Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated on - 27/04/24

CERBERUS (HMVS)



S117 Cerberus
HalfMoonBayBlackRock
HistoricView c1890s



S117 Cerberus
HalfMoonBayBlackRock
AerialView unknown



S117 Cerberus
HalfMoonBayBlackRock
DeckHalfUnderWater
unknown



S117 Cerberus
HalfMoonBayBlackRock
DeckView unknown



S117 Cerberus
HalfMoonBayBlackRock
FrontView unknown



S117 Cerberus
HalfMoonBayBlackRock
Guns unknown

Location

Half Moon Bay, Port Phillip Bay

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S117

Date lost

02/09/1926

Construction material

Iron

Hull

ironclad breastwork monitor, two revolving turrets, Armour: turrets - 10"-9" iron, 9"-11" teak; breastwork 9"-8" iron, 11"-9" teak; sides - 8"-6" iron, 11"-9" teak; main deck - 1.5" iron, 10" teak; breastwork deck - 1" iron, 10" teak. Bunkers 240 tons coal.

Propulsion

Steam - Screw

Engine specification

Two horizontal two cylinder double acting simple steam engines. 43 inches bore, 27 feet stroke, fired by four boilers with 30psi working pressure, twin screws. IHP 1370, NHP 250. Propellers single balanced, 95 square feet. 9.75 knots max speed. Coal b

Engine builder

Maudslay & Son

Number of masts

2

Length/Breadth/Depth

255.00 Feet / 45.00 Feet / 15.60 Feet

Builder

Palmer Shipbuilding & Iron Co., designed by Mr E.J. Reed, C.B., Chief Constructor, Admiralty

Year of construction

1867

Built port

Jarrow-on-Tyne

Built country

England

Date lost

02/09/1926

Owner

Sandringham Council

Cause of loss

Scuttled as breakwater

Statement of significance

The former flagship of the Victorian Colonial Navy, HMVS Cerberus is internationally significant as a surviving example of a turret ship, or breastwork monitor class of warship. It was the first armoured warship built for Australia, and upon Federation became the Commonwealth of Australia's first capital ship. When it was built, along with its sister ship Magdala they were the first British ships to have low freeboard, breastwork protection, a central superstructure with fore and aft turrets, and the first warships ever built to operate solely on steam propulsion. The Cerberus represents the transition from large high profile wooden sailing warships armed with hundreds of cannon to a low profile 'floating raft' using explosive shells, revolving turret guns, and an iron hull and breastwork. The Cerberus had an uneventful career for a naval vessel, with never a shot fired in anger in 53 years of service between 1871 and 1926. The HMAS Cerberus naval depot at Flinders is named after the HMVS Cerberus. After its use as a capital ship had expired, the Cerberus operated in Port Phillip as a port guard ship, a floating explosives store, and a submarine depot ship for the six J-Class submarines until being purposely sunk in 1926 for use as a breakwater for the Black Rock Yacht Club.

There is a 0.5 hectare rectangular Protected Zone around Cerberus, defined by buoys (5m from bow and stern, 25 m from centreline). No entry is permitted unless a Permit has been authorised by Heritage Victoria. The center point of the Protected Zone is positioned at -37.967405, 145.007895 WGS84

VHR history

Armament: 4 muzzle loading rifled Armstrong guns, mounted in 2 turrets, 10" bore, length 15'; refit 1879, added 4 Nordenfelt guns to armament. Armour: turrets - 10"-9" iron, 9"-11" teak; breastwork 9"-8" iron, 11"-9" teak; sides - 8"-6" iron, 11"-9" teak; maindeck - 1.5" iron, 10" teak; breastwork deck - 1" iron, 10" teak. Laid down in 1867 and launched 1868, the ironclad monitor was the forerunner of modern battleship and served colony of Victoria and then the Commonwealth 1871-1924. After its voyage to Melbourne, which was plagued with difficulties, it acquitted itself well in annual Easter exercises although never called on to fire a shot in anger nor to leave Port Phillip. During World War I was used to store explosives and in 1921, renamed Platypus II, acted as depot ship to J Class submarines. In 1924 sold to Melbourne Salvage Co. and partly dismantled at Williamstown. In 1926 bought by Sandringham Council.

Refs in Argus Fri July 14 1865 p4 c5 re: Vic. debate about whether to use Armstrong guns.