

Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated on - 18/10/24

JANE

Location

Cape Bridgewater, east end of Discovery Bay

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S358

Date lost

06/06/1863

Official number

32039

Construction material

Wood

Propulsion

Sail

Number of masts

2

Length/Breadth/Depth

43.00 / 13.20 / 7.30

Builder

John Williams

Year of construction

1850

Built port

Melbourne

Built country

Australia

Registration Number

5 of 1850

Registration Port

Melbourne

Date lost

06/06/1863

Departure

Port Adelaide

Destination

Otago, New Zealand

Cargo

Flour, bran, bark and leather

Owner

W.J Hutchinson

Master

Captain Lakie

Weather conditions

Squally, high seas

Cause of loss

Poor visibility preventing Master from obtaining a navigational fix, vessel driven ashore on to rocks

Number of crew

8

VHR history

The barque JANE under the command of Captain Lakie came ashore in blustery conditions on 6 June 1863 just below the farmhouse of a well known Portland Settler, Mr Joshua Black. The alarm was quickly raised and the lifeboat sent to the scene of the wreck. The Rocket Crew under the command of the Harbour Master, Captain

Fawthrop, proceeded to the scene of the wreck overland. The Rocket Crew fired off three rockets but all failed to make it to the vessel. Eventually a line was floated ashore from the wreck and the Captain and crew made it safely ashore. During the rescue a local resident, Waldy Hedditch, was drowned in attempting to secure the rescue line floated ashore from the wreck. This tragedy, which had happened in a matter of seconds, cast a gloom over Portland. Waldy Hedditch's body was not recovered. It was shortly after midday when Captain Fawthrop arrived and as soon as the lifesaving apparatus could be set up a rocket was fired. This carried a line across the ship, but it was so high that the men onboard could not reach it. Two others were fired, but these fell short. While this was being done the sailors continued their efforts to float a line ashore and finally were successful. By this time over a hundred people had gathered onshore and they sent up a great cheer when the cask containing the frail line was carried up from sea. Many willing helpers hauled the line in and attached a hawser which followed it and was made a straight as possible. It was about 4 o'clock when the first sailor left the ship and made his way along the hawser. After a ten minute struggle through the breakers he reached the shore in an exhausted state. The second man had little trouble and as soon as he reached shore he added his weight to those hauling on the hawser. The third followed successfully but the fourth almost drowned as he stowed away 10 pounds of tobacco in his clothing and the extra weight made him sink deep into the breakers. He managed to get rid of the tobacco, but was too exhausted to do more and was only saved when one of the shore helpers risked his life to go to his aid. By dark, eight sailors had been taken from the wreck and only the Captain remained. Hours later he was rescued by the lifeboat crew. He was slightly injured and bruised and was the only shipwrecked man who required medical attention. The Jane and her cargo were completely lost.