

# Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated on - 30/04/24

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## MONUMENTAL CITY



S473 MonumentalCity  
TullabergalslandBassStrait  
DiversOnWreck



S473 MonumentalCity  
TullabergalslandBassStrait  
BrokenCrockery



S473 MonumentalCity  
TullabergalslandBassStrait  
DiversWithEngine



S473 MonumentalCity  
TullabergalslandBassStrait  
Propellor



S473 MonumentalCity  
TullabergalslandBassStrait  
SideView



S473 MonumentalCity  
TullabergalslandBassStrait  
IronDetail



S473 MonumentalCity  
TullabergalslandBassStrait  
Monument

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### Location

Tullaberga Island, near Gabo Island and Mallacoota

### Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S473

### Date lost

15/05/1853

## **Construction material**

Wood

## **Hull**

Ship rigged (?), single deck, round stern, no galleries, figurehead

## **Propulsion**

Steam - Screw

## **Engine specification**

2 direct acting oscillating. 44 inch diameter cylinders with a 3 stroke. 119 horsepower (nominal)

## **Number of masts**

3

## **Length/Breadth/Depth**

174.83 Feet / 29.75 Feet / 15.00 Feet

## **Builder**

Murray and Hazlehurst

## **Year of construction**

1850

## **Built port**

Baltimore, Maryland

## **Built country**

United States of America

## **Registration Port**

Baltimore

## **Date lost**

15/05/1853

## **Departure**

Melbourne

## **Destination**

Sydney

## **Cargo**

general

## **Owner**

M. Strobed

## **Master**

Captain William Henry Adams

## **Weather conditions**

South easterly

## **Cause of loss**

Navigational error

## **Passenger comments**

Of the 8 Cabin passengers only<br /> Mr Gavin McKerrow ( Mc Harrow? ) survived.<br /> <br /> 2nd Class Passengers:<br /> Mr W.C. Howard, of Melbourne<br /> Charles Johnson, of Melbourne<br /> John Fisher, of Melbourne<br /> James Wheeler, of Melbourne<br /> Peter Ferguson, of Sydney<br /> Samuel Di

## **Number of crew**

45

## **Crew comments**

Mr Edward Van Sice, 1st Officer<br /> Mr W H Adams, Second Engineer<br /> Mr William V Cutter , Second officer<br /> Edward Roberts, seaman<br /> Charles Vine, seaman<br /> Charles Stone, seaman<br /> Elijah Beale, seaman<br /> William Hilton ( Nelson?), seaman<br /> Mr William Duncan, chief

## **Statement of significance**

<p>The American steamer Monumental City was one of the first screw steamers to cross the Pacific, attracted by the Victorian gold rush. It had previously been involved in the Californian gold rush carrying passengers from Nicaragua to San Francisco as they crossed the American continent from Europe and the east coast of America. The surviving engine parts and propellor are significant as they represent a transition phase from wooden hulled steamships to iron screw steamships, and a phase of rapid development in marine steam engine technology. It is also rare as at the time most American steamships were paddle steamers. It had a short career on the Australian coast, being wrecked on Tullaberga Island after only one month in service. Thirty seven lives were lost in the disaster, of whom 35 were passengers including its owner, and it led to the building of the Gabo Island lighthouse.</p>

## **VHR history**

S.S. Monumental City was a single-decked, ship-rigged wooden single screw steamer, built in 1850 in Baltimore USA. The ship was originally built for trade in the Hawaiian Islands, which didn't turn out to be economical. The vessel was then put on the Panama to San Francisco run to transport passengers chasing gold discovered in California in 1848. However, this wasn't a great success either, as Monumental City's engines proved unreliable

and too slow to capture a consistent share of the market.<br /> <br /> Monumental City became the second steamship ( preceded by Consider a few months earlier) to cross the Pacific in 1853, arriving in Sydney in only 65 days. From there, the ship then headed south to Melbourne, taking 166 passengers heading to the Victorian gold fields. However on the return journey to Sydney, Monumental City ran aground at Tullaberga Island near Mallacoota with the loss of 37 lives (Staniforth 1986 163-164).<br /> <br /> The remains of the wreck lie in very shallow water and there is very little coherent ship remains. The engine and propeller, three anchors and some broken crockery are the main elements remaining from the ship (Anderson 1999:36-37). Heritage Victoria holds 39 artefacts from Monumental City.<br />