

Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated on - 13/10/24

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

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
 Mr Gavin McKerrow (Mc Harrow?) survived.

 2nd Class Passengers:
 Mr W.C. Howard, of Melbourne
 Charles Johnson, of Melbourne
 John Fisher, of Melbourne
 James Wheeler, of Melbourne
 Peter Ferguson, of Sydney
 Samuel Di

Number of crew

45

Crew comments

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

 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).

 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.
