

Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated on - 27/09/24

SS PETRIANA



S524 Petriana
PortPhillipHeadsPointNepean
HistoricView



S524 Petriana
PortPhillipHeadsPointNepean
HistoricViewOfWreck



S524 Petriana
PortPhillipHeadsPointNepean
Anchor Feb1997



S524 Petriana
PortPhillipHeadsPointNepean
HullSection Feb1997



S524 Petriana
PortPhillipHeadsPointNepean
OilProductHeater Feb1997



S524 Petriana
PortPhillipHeadsPointNepean
SouthEndOfSite Feb1997

Location

Port Phillip Heads, Point Nepean, Petriana Reef

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S524

Date lost

28/11/1903

Official number

81600

Construction material

Iron

Hull

Iron; single deck, 2 tiers beams; 6 compartments(bulk oil storage; waterballast, elliptic stern

Propulsion

Steam - Screw

Engine specification

twin compound, direct-acting, surface condensing, 200HP, 9.5 knots max speed

Engine builder

John Dickinson, Sunderland UK

Number of masts

3

Length/Breadth/Depth

260.50 Feet / 34.25 Feet / 21.75 Feet

Builder

A. Leslie & Co.

Year of construction

1879

Built port

Newcastle

Built country

England

Registration Port

London

Date lost

28/11/1903

Departure

Balik Papan, Boneo

Destination

Melbourne

Cargo

1300 tons oil

Owner

Asiatic Petroleum Co. Ltd (Shell Transport and Trading Company)

Master

Captain William Kerr

Weather conditions

Foggy conditions; morning; flood tide making

Cause of loss

Ran ashore in fog

Number of crew

35

Crew comments

5 white officers, 16 Chinese, 11 Malays

Statement of significance

<p>The Petriana is significant historically as a shipwreck that became a focus in Australian politics for the treatment of its Lascar (Indo-Malay) crew under the White Australia policy. It was also Victoria's, and Australia's first oil spill, with catastrophic environmental consequences. The remains of the Petriana represent the increasing use of fuel oils, and the use of specially made bulk oil transport ships.</p>

VHR history

Ran ashore while in charge of Pilot Henry Press. Soon after 7 am. Because of danger from cargo, officers and crew quickly taken off. Abandoned after unsuccessful attempts by tugs to move vessel. Oil had been pumped out in attempt to lighten vessel, causing contamination of fish and pollution to nearby beaches that lasted for months. This was Victoria's and Australia's first major oil spill. Pilot Press, in spite of high regard in which he was held by the maritime community, had his certificate suspended for 12 months for negligence. Invoking the immigration laws of the newly federated Commonwealth of Australia, the local authorities refused to allow the Asiatic seamen to land - they were kept on a tug in the Bay, awaiting transshipment. A press and public outcry followed. Deakin, the Prime Minister, supported the decision. Captain Kerr was appalled at this application of the 'White Australia' policy. The men were soon shipped back to Hong Kong, via Singapore, on the Japanese steamer Kasuga Maru.