

Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated on - 28/09/24

SWAN

Location

Bass Strait, Off Cape Schanck

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S643

Date lost

27/10/1906

Official number

32154

Construction material

Wood

Hull

1 deck; square stern; carvel built; no galleries; stem head

Propulsion

Sail

Engine specification

Bradshaw oil engine (over 300 Pounds) fitted in 1905

Number of masts

2

Length/Breadth/Depth

60.00 Feet / 14.00 Feet / 4.60 Feet

Year of construction

1862

Built port

Peppermint Bay, Tasmania

Built country

Australia

Registration Number

3 of 1868

Registration Port

Melbourne

Date lost

27/10/1906

Departure

Flinders

Destination

Melbourne

Cargo

Wool, hides, skins, tallow

Owner

Johann August Janson, mariner, of Footscray

Master

Captain Janson

Weather conditions

Bright moonlight

Cause of loss

Collision, run down and sunk by SS Queenscliff

Number of crew

2

Crew comments

2 including captain

VHR history

The ketch Swan was entered the Western Port-Melbourne trade under the command of Capt Loch sometime in the 1880s. According to Gliddon, the Swan was originally built as a cutter and rigged as a ketch. On its final voyage, the Swan was making for the Heads on 7 October 1906 at about 5 knots. About half way between Cape Schanck and Heads, the master saw the SS Queenscliff 3 miles from shore in bright moonlight, steaming at 10 knots. He kept green light of Queenscliff on the starboard side when suddenly the steamer bore down on the Swan, striking it on starboard side, driving a large hole through the 13" planking. The crew lowered the boat and got clear in time to avoid being caught in the rigging as the Swan heeled over. They were taken on board the Queenscliff with only the clothes they stood in. The ship's papers were lost. Two hours later, the ketch still visible with waves washing over it. The master and crew were landed at Rhyll at 8 am next morning. Janson owned the Swan for 18 years and it was still sound after 44 years of service. A Court of Marine Inquiry found Charles P. Johnson, mate of the Queenscliff and in charge at the time, guilty of careless navigation in neglecting to keep a proper look out. Taking into account his good record, the Court suspended his certificate for three months and fined him 5 guineas on account of the expense of the inquiry.