

Victorian Heritage Database Report

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URALBA



S688 Uralba
PortPhillipBayCarrum
HistoricView



S688 Uralba
PortPhillipBayCarrum
MorningtonFootballDisasterMei

Location

Off Carrum, Port Phillip Bay

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S688

Date lost

05/11/1971

Official number

174694

Construction material

Wood

Hull

One deck; straight stem, counter stern; carvel built; bulkheads; wooden frame Turpentine construction, hold capacity 18,340 cubic feet, hold length 76 ft, hatch dimensions 40ft X 60ft. Water tanks 2 X 10 tons boiler feed tanks, 4 X 8.5 tons and 1 X 11.

Propulsion

Steam - Unknown

Number of masts

2

Length/Breadth/Depth

154.50 Feet / 37.00 Feet / 9.30 Feet

Builder

Ernest Wright

Year of construction

1942

Built port

Tuncurry, New South Wales

Built country

Australia

Registration Number

9 of 1942

Registration Port

Sydney

Date lost

05/11/1971

Departure

Towed to Carrum for sinking as artificial reef.

Cargo

Not applicable

Owner

Fisheries and Wildlife Division, Victorian Government

Cause of loss

Hulked and scuttled as artificial reef

VHR history

The Uralba was the last vessel built for the North Coast Steam Navigation Co., and fitted with second-hand machinery. It was also the last wooden coal burner built in Australia. Scuttled, with an old pleasure boat (condemned by Marine Board), by the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands as part of their artificial reef program. This program resulted in a number of reefs being established in Port Phillip Bay and Western Port, including the George Kermode off Phillip Island. The Uralba had been a wartime boom defence vessel, and served in Milne Bay, New Guinea. Purchased by State Electricity Commission of Victoria in 1946, running concrete cargoes between Tasmania and the mainland. Two ownership changes followed. Then Benny Gelbart of Footscray bought the vessel for conversion to a Northern Territory cattle boat but it sank when moored in Yarra -caulking had deteriorated. It was salvaged, re-caulked, and towed to a mooring adjacent to the Charles Grimes Bridge. Eleven of its natural knees were used in the reconstruction of the Golden Plover, now in Queensland. The Uralba remained there until, filled with ballast, it was towed by the Ports and Harbors tug Fury to reef-site and blown with 20 sticks of gelignite by 'Buck' Taylor - debris went everywhere. Sydney registry closed 8 Dec. 1958 - no longer required.
