

Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated on - 27/09/24

SS VICKY



SS Vicky NLA

Location

Bass Strait, Off Wilsons Promontory

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S695

Date lost

25/06/1956

Official number

140618

Construction material

Steel

Propulsion

Steam - Screw

Engine specification

2 Triple expansion steam engines

Length/Breadth/Depth

165.50 Feet / 36.60 Feet / 11.20 Feet

Builder

J. Lewis and Sons

Year of construction

1930

Built port

Aberdeen

Built country

Scotland

Registration Number

2/1931

Registration Port

Sydney

Date lost

25/06/1956

Departure

Sydney

Destination

Melbourne

Cargo

Coal

Owner

The Company of Manila

Master

Captain Barrientos

Weather conditions

Gale and heavy seas.

Cause of loss

Had engine troubles and began to leak. With steamer KING DAVID standing by, VICKY developed a severe list forcing the crew to leap into the sea then capsized.

Number of crew

21

VHR history

Three weeks prior to sinking SS Vicky had been purchased from the Australian Steamships Company by the Tye Company of Manila which also bought the Melbourne dredge Lady Stanley. The vessel was previously well known on the Australian coast as the collier Caldare. The Vicky departed Sydney for Melbourne on the 22 of June 1956 with the intent of collecting the dredge Lady Stanley and towing it back to the Philippines to be broken up. Early on the 24th when off Wilsons promontory, the collier's engines were disabled by a faulty valve which prevented the vessel from raising steam. The vessel drifted throughout the night in increasingly wild seas as the engineer attempted to rectify the faulty 4.15pm the Captain Barrientos radioed for help. The freighter King David arrived on the scene about 80 minutes later . Soon afterwards attempts began to pass a tow line to the Vicky. Ferocious sea conditions and the lack of steam power made it impossible for the Vicky's crew to haul the heavy tow line on board . At 7.15 the following morning King David reported by radio to Melbourne that the attempts to get the Vicky in tow had failed and that the Vicky has developed a serious list to starboard . The order was given to prepare to abandon ship at 7.25 am one life boat was jammed and became unusable and at 7.35 am the Vicky sank. The King David lowered its own life boats and rescued 14 survivors including the captain. A further three survivors were rescued by the passing Trochurus but two of them died shortly after being rescued. The search for further survivors was abandoned at 11.10 am and the King David returned to Queenscliff where survivors were landed and later transferred to Melbourne by bus. and soon began to leak in the rough seas. The freighter King David made unsuccessful attempts to take the vessel in tow. The Vicky began to list dangerously, making it impossible to lower the life boats, so the crew was forced to jump into the sea. The King David picked up fourteen survivors including the master, and the tanker Trochurus also picked up three men, but two died soon after being rescued. Eight crewmen were lost. Members of the Maritime Archaeological Association of Victoria (MAAV) discovered the wreck 60 miles east of Wilsons Promontory in March 2018.