

Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated on - 20/10/24

BLACKBIRD



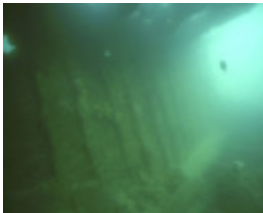
S75 Blackbird PortAlbert
Divers 15/06/1999



S75 Blackbird PortAlbert
Artifact 15/06/1999



S75 Blackbird PortAlbert Bow
15/06/1999



S75 Blackbird PortAlbert
Interior 20/07/1999 WC



S75 Blackbird PortAlbert
Porthole 15/06/1999



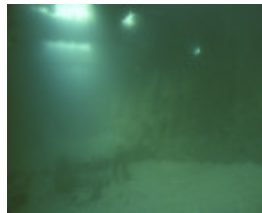
S75 Blackbird PortAlbert
MainDeckBeams 20/07/1999
WC



S75 Blackbird PortAlbert
TopView 15/06/1999



S75 Blackbird PortAlbert Bow
20/07/1999 WC



S75 Blackbird PortAlbert
InsideHullBow 20/07/1999
WC



S75 Blackbird SitePlan
diveinfosheet 1992

Location

Clonmel Island, Port Albert

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S75

Date lost

02/06/1878

Official number

48407

Construction material

Iron

Hull

3 masted barque-rigged auxiliary, clincher built Machinery Certificate 1863
 4 bulkheads, Horizontal Engine 80HP. Classified 9 A1 by Lloyds, built under Special Survey Aug 1863 .

Propulsion

Steam - Screw

Engine specification

2 cylinder 80 horsepower
 Cylindrical boiler on site is replacement

Engine builder

Morrison Newcastle

Number of masts

3

Length/Breadth/Depth

196.40 Feet / 28.40 Feet / 16.70 Feet

Builder

C. Mitchell & Co

Year of construction

1863

Built port

Low Walker, Newcastle

Built country

England

Registration Number

54 of 1874

Registration Port

Sydney

Date lost

02/06/1878

Departure

Newcastle

Destination

Melbourne

Cargo

Coal

Owner

Messrs Cowlshaw Brothers of Sydney

Master

Captain McConnachy

Cause of loss

Ran ashore through navigation error

Passenger comments

Mrs M Swanton
 Messrs Charles Rolfe and Louis Oakley

Number of crew

26

Crew comments

William Mungall - Chief Officer
 Jas McEwan - Second Mate
 Williams Irvine - Chief Engineer
 Henry Phillips - Second Engineer
 Charles Meak - Fireman
 Christopher McGhee - Able Seaman

Charles Lawson - Able Seaman (at the wheel at the time of the wreck)
 Martin - Steward and Providor

 There was another 18 unnamed crew members (one of whom was a lad paying for his passage by working for the steward

Statement of significance

<p>The SS Blackbird is archaeologically and recreationally significant as a representative example of auxillary steamer involved in the Australian colonial coastal trade, with well preserved hull structure, artifacts, and machinery.</p>

VHR history

The steam collier Blackbird went ashore in the same gale that wrecked the Loch Ard. However, in this wreck, all reached safety. The clipper bow and the counter stern of the Blackbird are still remarkably intact.

 Reckless navigation caused the wreck of the Blackbird on Clonmel Island. The master's certificate was suspended for 12 months. Recent work on the site seems to indicate that the BLACKBIRD had been refitted with new engines at some time in its career . The engines on the site are inverted compounding engines; however, Lloyds calls them horizontal engines.
 There is mention in the MHU file of changes in the Port Albert Bar after many years of stability (Manifold, 1984).

 Reference to local aborigines in the Gippsland Times:
 "The smartness and activity of the native youth came into play with good effect on the morning of the wreck, when Willie and Louis Smith, aged 13 and 16 respectively, , jumped into their father's boats, and accompanied by two other youths named R. McPhee and John Casbolt, pulled straight to the wreck, arriving there nearly an hour before any other boat. The first boatload of shipwrecked people (13 males and one female) had just beached their boat and got ashore through the surf, but having no dry matches it was with no small feeling of gratitude that they welcomed the youthful crew who were not long in lighting a good fire for the benefit of the shivering castaways" (GT 10/6/1878)