

Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated on - 12/07/24

BLACK EAGLE

Location

Breakwater Pier, Williamstown

Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S77

Date lost

26/12/1884

Official number

43311

Construction material

Wood

Hull

Clinker built, sheathed with yellow metal 1853 2 Carvel built, 1 deck, round stern

Propulsion

Steam - Paddle

Engine specification

Steam engine 50 or 60 HP

Length/Breadth/Depth

87.50 Feet / 17.10 Feet / 9.70 Feet

Year of construction

1852

Built port

South Shields or North Shields (UID 134)

Built country

England

Registration Number

89 of 1854

Registration Port

Melbourne

Date lost

26/12/1884

Departure

Brighton

Destination

St Kilda

Cargo

Not applicable
 Had previously carried bricks and cordages (UID 134)

Owner

7 owners at 11 July 1884, (Melbourne Towage Co.) incl. James Deane, Hugh Reid, David York Syme, James McIntyre, John Clark, Robert Mannoock, Frederick Reed

Master

Captain John Fitzgibbon

Cause of loss

Sprang a leak near Point Ormond, abandoned and sank at St Kilda jetty (UID 52, 9)
 Later refloated and towed to Williamstown

Passenger comments

Excursionists

Statement of significance

<p>The vessel is significant as it represents a type of vessel, paddle steamer employed for passenger transportation around Victoria. It is historically significant for this reason and for its involvement as an excursion steamer in Port Phillip Bay. Its archaeological significance is difficult to assess due to it having not been inspected and with historical sources indicating that it had been salvaged and dismantled after being refloated.</p>

VHR history

After making several trips safely that day, about 3 pm sprang a leak. Water gained rapidly causing vessel to list to one side but passengers were landed at St Kilda before steamer sank within the hour. Had been overhauled three weeks earlier. Marine Board Inquiry praised Fitzgibbon for preventing panic and getting steamer alongside St Kilda Pier. Black Eagle partly insured. Licensed to carry 194 passengers until 10 June 1885. Auctioned and sold for ten pounds to John Clark on 30 Dec. 1884. Attempts to refloat steamer finally successful, towed to Williamstown and dismantled. Remains were sunk on seaward side of Breakwater Pier. Parts of boiler visible as late as 1956. Had arrived from Glasgow, Feb. 1854, carrying bricks and cordages, then employed between Railway Pier and Williamstown and as excursion steamer. Had assisted at wreck of City of Launceston, Nov. 1865. Had a number of earlier owners.