

# Victorian Heritage Database Report

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## BIRCHGROVE

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### Location

Near The Nobbies, Phillip Island

### Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

S93

### Date lost

11/02/1932

### Official number

13789

### Construction material

Wood

### Hull

wooden lighter 218t, ex 3m barque 543t 138.8 x 28.6 x 18.7

### Propulsion

Sail

### Length/Breadth/Depth

134.50 Feet / 28.00 Feet / 9.00 Feet

### Year of construction

1856

### Built port

Sunderland

### Built country

England

## Registration Port

Melbourne

## Date lost

11/02/1932

## Owner

1860: S.J. Pegg

## Master

(Captain P.Taylor 1875)(Captain T.Robson 1880)

## Cause of loss

Deliberatly set on fire, drifted ashore onto, rocks

## VHR history

Many former sailing vessels such as the barque Birch Grove ended their careers as lighters and coal hulks. When the Birch Grove had ceased to be useful in this capacity, it was towed out to sea with the hulk of the barque Palace, set on fire but the tide current and wind blew it ashore near the Nobbies on Phillip Island.<br /><br /> Two vessels, the PALACE and BIRCH GROVE, were wrecked at Cat Bay near the Nobbies at Phillip Island in 1932. However, the newspaper article that reported the wrecking of the two vessels does not provide any indication of the vessels' names. A search of Melbourne newspapers has indicated that two vessel, the BIRCH GROVE and PALACE were used as hulks up until the 1930s. Information recently obtained from 'The Port of Melbourne Quarterly' has stated that both the English-built BIRCH GROVE and the American-built PALACE were once ocean going sailing barques. Both vessels were condemned in the 1880s and were converted into lighters or hulks owned by The Victorian Lighterage Company. In February 1932 both vessels in company with tug KEERA departed Melbourne. The tug crew set the two vessels on fire and cast them adrift; however, the fires went out and the vessels drifted ashore in the vicinity of the Nobbies where they were broken up by the action of the sea. Lloyds indicate that the BIRCH GROVE was a wooden framed, felted and yellow metalled in accordance to the Rules. The vessel's rating of 13 A1 and its continued passing of surveys seems to indicate that it was a well-constructed vessel.